# Erap mistress to testify against him, says DOJ

Story Below, Column 1

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BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2001 ★ 38 PAGES 3 SECTIONS VOL.16 NO. 55 ₱15

## Metro folk accept Gloria, poll shows

**By Christine Avendaño and Gil Cabacungan Jr.**

THE MAJORITY of Metro Manila residents believe in the legitimacy of the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo, according to the Social Weather Stations.

Fifty-three (53) percent of the 300 respon-

METRO/ A14

HA? SYA PA RIN?

# Defiant Estrada: I am still President

### 'To avoid violence, I left Malacañang but not my post'

AFP CHIEF REYES: No, you're not.

## Military fully backs GMA, says Reyes

**By Carlito Pablo and Cathy C. Yamsuan**

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has the full backing of the military and police, and any attempt to destabilize the government will be "nipped in the bud," Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Angelo Reyes declared yesterday.

He said, however, that there were "very, very raw reports" on supposed destabilization plots, and that the AFP would take the involvement of any member of the military in such plots "very, very seriously."

Reyes did not identify the supposed plotters, but Lt. Gen. Jose Calimlim, AFP vice chief of staff, issued a statement decrying "persistent reports insinuating" that he would "stage a coup."

"I believe these reports are designed not only to sow intrigues in the AFP, which is united under the new leadership of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, but (also) to destroy my integrity as a person," Calimlim said.

MILITARY/ A7

**By Cathy C. Yamsuan**

**A DEFIANT Joseph Estrada yesterday insisted he was still the country's duly elected President, saying his successor Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo would have to make way for him if and when he ends his leave.**

Emerging from self-imposed isolation 11 days after Edsa People Power II ended his 30-month-old rule, Estrada rejected calls for his exile and vowed to take "peaceful, legal and non-violent" steps to shore up his claim to the presidency.

"I abandoned Malacañang but not my post," Estrada told hundreds of cheering supporters at the Partido ng Masang Pilipino national convention at Club Filipino in San Juan.

"Pursuant to the provisions of our Constitution therefore, I remain the duly elected President, now on leave, forced by events and circumstance beyond my control," he said.

But Gen. Angelo Reyes, Armed Forces chief of staff, assured President Macapagal-Arroyo of the military's full support. Congress and Church leaders also scoffed at Estrada's claim. *(See related stories on Page A1.)*

Even so, Estrada was again acting the big man yesterday, a far cry from the bowed and beaten figure that left the Palace on Jan. 20.

Even though the world community has recognized Ms Macapagal as head of the Philippine government, Estrada said his successor "is still the Vice President. The appointments she made are temporary under our Constitution."

DEFIANT/ A14

ERNIE U SARMIENTO

HAIL, hail, the gang's all here for the convention of the Partido ng Masang Pilipino at Club Filipino on Wednesday. Flanking Joseph Estrada, from left, former Health Secretary Alberto Romualdez and reelectionist Senators Juan Ponce Enrile and Blas Ople. Behind is former Executive Secretary Ronaldo Zamora.

## Erap out to 'seek vindication' in polls

**By Volt Contreras, Cathy C. Yamsuan and Andrea T. Echavez**

MARSHALED by their "*Ginoong Pangulo*," campaign-ready allies of deposed President Joseph Estrada are, in the words of former Executive Secretary Ronaldo Zamora, out to "seek vindication" for their ousted leader—and perhaps for themselves—in the May 14 polls.

Estrada's party, the Partido ng Masang Pilipino (PMP), yesterday named its 24 nominees for the 12 senatorial seats up for grabs, a list that will eventually be trimmed down to a dozen names.

The initial lineup was led by former First Lady Luisa "Loi" Ejercito, whose campaign slogan, "Doktora ng Masa," was reportedly picked by no less than her husband.

Rounding out the rest of the list are many names that less than two weeks ago were widely booed in the streets by hundreds of thousands of anti-Estrada protesters:

- Reelectionist Senators Juan Ponce Enrile, Miriam Defensor-Santiago, Gregorio Honasan, three of the senator-judges who voted against allowing key evidence into Estrada's impeachment trial.
- Former Philippine National

ERAP OUT/ A14

## Malacañang: Estrada free to dream

**By Donna S. Cueto and Juliet L. Javellana**

MALACAÑANG yesterday dismissed the claims to the presidency of ousted leader Joseph Estrada, saying he was "free to dream" and there was nothing wrong with this.

Renato Corona, spokesperson and chief of staff of President Macapagal-Arroyo, said Estrada should come to terms with his present situation since the new President has been recognized by the Supreme Court, the majority of Filipinos and the world.

"He's entitled to his opinion. Well, maybe in his mind he is still the president," Corona said in a press briefing yesterday.

Others gave virtually the same opinion of Estrada's claim he was still legally the president and the Macapagal administration was an "acting government."

Estrada was driven from power by a popular revolt on Jan. 20 that was instigated by revelations and events at his Senate impeachment trial on bribery, graft and other charges.

MALACAÑANG/ A7

VAL HANDUMON

NO, you're not, President Macapagal seems to be saying to her ousted predecessor, during consultations on Wednesday with the urban poor at the National Government Center in Barangay Commonwealth, Quezon City.

## Santo Tomas gets labor; Bañez to BIR

**By Christine Avendaño**

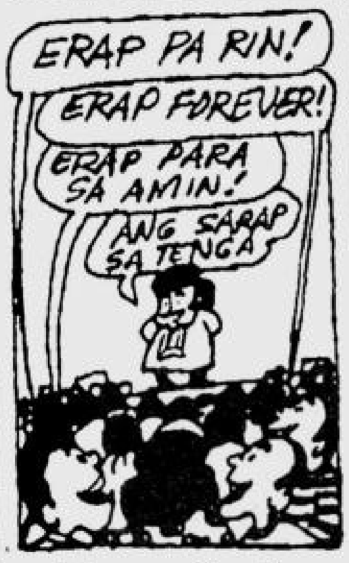
THE MACAPAGAL administration yesterday announced more appointments to key posts, including that of a former chief of the Civil Service Commission as labor secretary.

Renato Corona, chief of staff and spokesperson of President Macapagal-Arroyo, told reporters at a briefing that the labor portfolio had been given to Patricia Santo Tomas.

A member of the President's search committee, Santo Tomas is also a former chief of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration.

Corona said Rene Bañez had been named commissioner of the Bureau of Internal Revenue, and Ephrain Genuino, earlier appointed president of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp., as its concurrent chair.

SANTO/ A14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ANG SARAP SA TENGA

## *Erap finds 'sic transit Gloria mundi'*

**By Volt Contreras**

DEPOSED presidents never seem to be able to take the hint.

It was as if a separate republic were being proclaimed when "President" Joseph Estrada made his first public appearance since People Power II drove him ignominiously out of Malacañang less than two weeks ago.

But although Estrada still claimed to be President, the seal of office was conspicuously missing from the podium at the national convention of the Partido ng

ERAP/ A14

## Now, it's Weng who's set to testify vs Erap

**By Michael Lim Ubac, Dona Pazzibugan and Andrea Trinidad-Echavez**

NOW, it's ousted President Joseph Estrada against one of his mistresses.

Justice Secretary Hernando Perez yesterday said that one of Estrada's mistresses was willing to testify against the former President.

Perez refused to name the mistress but House Majority Leader Sergio Apostol identified her as Rowena "Weng" Lopez, a former flight stewardess of Philippine Airlines.

But a source close to Estrada denied that Lopez was set to testify.

Apostol, a prosecutor in the impeachment trial of Estrada, said Lopez was supposed to be a "surprise witness" of the prosecution in the trial. She backed out at the last minute.

Perez also disclosed that the DOJ had received feelers that other women linked to Estrada were also willing to testify.

"I don't know if they are mistresses, but they are ladies. We have to check first on what they know. So we are not yet ready to reveal their names," he told reporters.

Perez asked the public for patience because the DOJ was "swamped by witnesses coming forward."

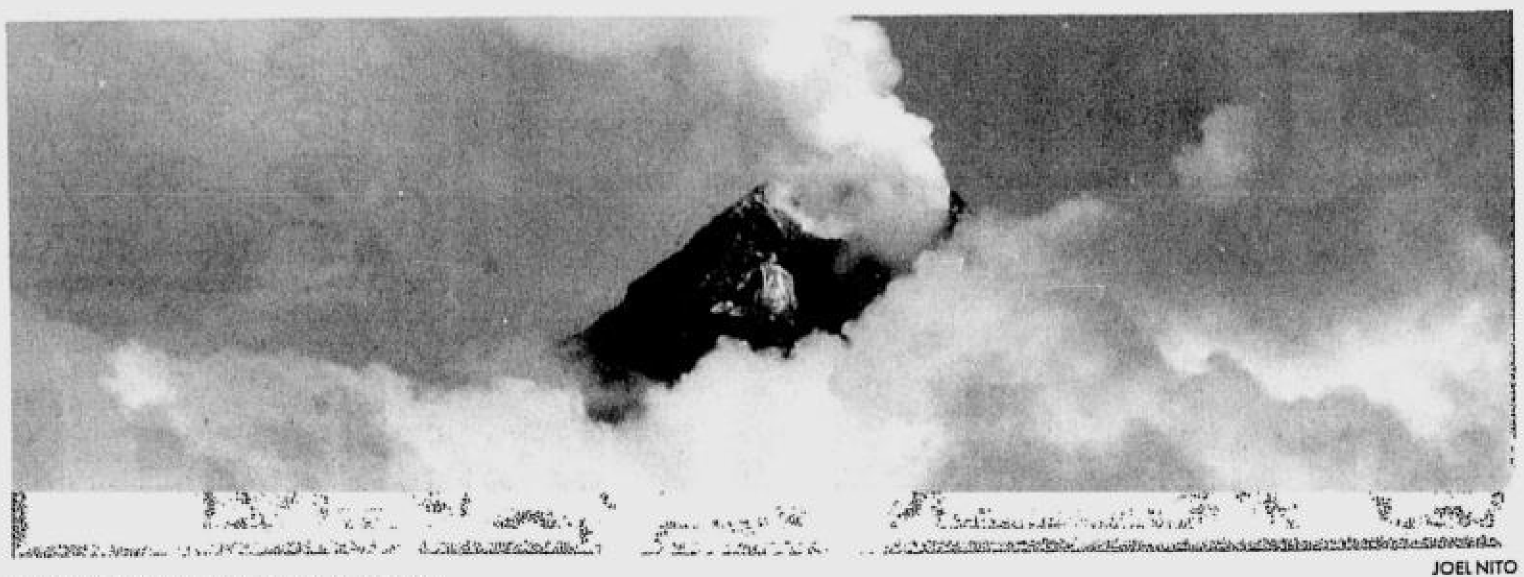
Nongovernment organizations cautioned the Department of Justice against accepting cronies of Estrada as state witnesses, saying government prosecutors no longer needed their testimony.

The Anti-Trapo Movement said the pieces of evidence in the hands of private prosecutors were sufficient to convict Estrada.

NOW/ A14

# *Second* FRONT PAGE

SAAN NGA GALING ANG YAMAN NA 'YAN ?



JOEL NITO

**MAYON ABOVE THE CLOUDS**

The peak of the restive Mayon Volcano rises above the clouds, white plume billowing from its crater, as it emerges into view from the aircraft of acting Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita. Ermita, chair of the National Disaster Coordinating Council, made an aerial survey of the volcano yesterday. Volcanologists have kept Mayon under tight watch and have raised alert levels for an impending eruption.

## *Iglesia welcomes Gloria but is mum on her legitimacy*

THE IGLESIA ni Cristo religious sect yesterday welcomed a visit by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, calling her the person "actually holding the Presidency" and promising to "respond favorably" to her initiatives to reunite the country.

The INC said, however, it would "rather leave to the courts and legal experts" the question of the legitimacy of Ms Macapagal's Presidency.

Ms Macapagal called on Executive Minister Eraño Manalo at the INC Central Office where they had a private 30-minute conference.

The President would not give details of the private meeting, and just smiled and waved when questioned by reporters later.

In a statement, INC spokesperson Bienvenido Santiago said, "We welcome President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's initiative to consult with Bro. Eraño Manalo as she had done in the past.

"For now, since she is actually the person holding the Presidency and functioning as such, we respond favorably to her initiatives to rebuild and reunite the country," he said.

"We hope she will not be unduly influenced by the groups that are claiming credit for her installation as President, to the prejudice of others who were not so visible during those crucial moments of our history," the statement added.

The INC, in 1998, voted as a bloc for Estrada and then supported his presidency.

On Nov. 11, 2000, at the height of the gambling controversy that swirled around the former president, INC members made up the bulk of a million-strong prayer rally which called for constitutional processes to be followed with regard to the cases against Estrada.

While the prayer rally was perceived to be "pro-Erap," the INC said it only attended it to show it was in favor of following the Constitution and due legal process.

Yesterday, when asked if the INC considered the Macapagal presidency legitimate, Santiago said, "We would much rather leave that question to the courts and to the legal experts."

He said he did not know what Ms Macapagal and Manalo discussed in their closed-door meeting.

On the question of exile for Estrada, Santiago said the ousted president was "still very much a free man with all the rights of Filipino citizenship, including the right to come and go as he pleased."

The INC said, however, it was in favor of letting the deposed president face the charges filed against him in the country.

"Since he has indicated his intention to face the charges leveled against him and not leave the country, it would be in the interest of justice to allow him to do so, to settle these issues once and for all," Santiago said.

# Estrada sues gov't over frozen funds

**OUSTED President Joseph Estrada yesterday lodged a complaint with the Ombudsman's Office against a freeze imposed on his bank cash deposits on suspicion they included ill-gotten gains.**

Estrada accused the Bureau of Internal Revenue and Citibank of violating the law after they issued an order barring him and his wife, Luisa Loi" Ejercito, from withdrawing funds deposited at the Citibank Virra Mall branch in San Juan.

In another legal move to counter charges against Estrada, lawyer Sigfried Fortun warned the Senate against turning over to state prosecutors the controversial sealed envelope reportedly containing vital evidence against his client, according to a letter obtained by reporters yesterday.

Fortun warned he would "take all appropriate legal action against anyone who contravenes or violates the last official action of the Senate," which was to keep the envelope sealed.

### Unperturbed

But Justice Secretary Hernando Perez yesterday seemed unperturbed by Estrada's efforts to challenge the charges against him.

"He is entitled to do that. He can file (a case) if he wants to. But he should explain first where the money came from (because) he is claiming that he owns the money," Perez told reporters.

Perez said he would use Estrada's admission that the Citibank account belonged to him against the deposed leader. He pointed out that the Citibank account was not included in Estrada's Statement of Assets and Liabilities.

In the complaint to the Ombudsman, Estrada said the freeze order was imposed even though he was not under investigation for tax evasion and there was no evidence the money in the account was ill-gotten.

He also charged that the order violated a law prohibiting the seizure of foreign currency deposits and that the BIR officials involved did not have the power to issue such orders over bank deposits.

The government froze the bank accounts of Estrada and his wife in Citibank last week after anti-Estrada protesters barricaded the branch to prevent Estrada from emptying a foreign currency account worth $3 million, and peso deposits worth about P100 million.

### Ill-gotten

The ousted leader is alleged to have stashed ill-gotten wealth in various banks, including Citibank.

Senators sitting as judges in Estrada's impeachment trial had on Jan. 16 voted to exclude the evidence and "no adverse or contrary action" had been taken by the tribunal since then, stressed Fortun in a letter to Senate secretary Lutgardo Barbo.

"Accordingly it may be both wrongful and unlawful for you or any personnel in the impeachment court to break the seal and comply with the ombudsman's request without a contrary order from the Senate sitting as an impeachment court," Fortun said.

Fortun, who was reacting to a request by the Ombudsman for access to the envelope to use as evidence against Estrada, apparently disregarded a letter that Estrada had written on Jan. 19, hours before his ouster, asking Senate President Aquilino Pimentel to have the second envelope opened.

Prosecutors said the envelope contained documents linking Estrada to secret bank accounts he allegedly used to hide dirty money.

The Senate's 11-10 vote that barred introduction of the sealed envelope in Estrada's corruption trial triggered massive street protests, which eventually led to his downfall.

### No immunity

Ombudsman Aniano Desierto, claiming Estrada's presidential immunity no longer exists, launched an investigation against Estrada on six possible criminal charges on Jan. 22.

The justice department later ordered Estrada, his wife, son Jinggoy, and 21 other people not to leave the country.

In his complaint, Estrada said Deputy Commissioner Lilian Hefti and three other revenue officials acted in "abject bad faith with intent to cause damage" to him.

He said the three Citibank officials, including country manager Catherine Weir, "threw caution to the wind" by violating a law by agreeing to freeze foreign current-account deposits, claiming a law exempts such deposits from attachment or garnishment. *With reports from AFP, AP, Juliet Labog-Javellana and Michael Lim Ubac*

## *Enrile running for Senate again, is 13th on bets' list*

WILL the number 13 prove lucky for Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile?

Enrile filed his certificate of candidacy for reelection at the Commission on Elections Tuesday, landing 13th on the poll body's list of candidates for senator in the May 14 elections.

Enrile filed his certificate unannounced, one week after he had said he was not interested in running again after the negative public reaction to his vote not to open the second envelope at the impeachment trial of former president Joseph Estrada.

In his certificate, Enrile, 76, said he was running as an independent. It was learned, however, that he will be adopted into the LAMP senatorial lineup later. He attended yesterday's LAMP convention.

In an interview with Senate reporters, Enrile said he was "not worried" about the "hate campaign" being waged against him and the 10 other senators who were closely identified with Estrada.

"I have been in politics a long time," he said. "The same people waging the hate campaign against me have been doing so since 1986."

## Graftbuster facing impeachment for graft

By Andrea T. Echavez

THERE'S another impeachment complaint in the works, this time against the country's top graftbuster, Ombudsman Aniano Desierto.

Accusing Desierto of being one of the allegedly most corrupt government officials, civil society groups have declared all-out war on the Ombudsman and have threatened to launch a campaign for his immediate replacement.

"Desierto is one big obstruction to justice. He has failed (to uphold) the cause of justice on several fronts—human rights, behest and fraudulent loans, corruption cases, etc." said Fr. Reu Galoy, convenor of the Anti-Trapo Movement, in a press conference in Quezon City.

Desierto's replacement, Galoy said, should be accompanied by a thorough cleansing of the Ombudsman's office.

Lawyer JV Bautista said the impeachment complaint against Desierto would be filed before the next Congress as the present one would be closing soon.

Bautista said they doubted that Desierto would be able to give justice to the charges that have been filed against ousted President Joseph Estrada and his cronies because of his "tainted reputation." Therefore he has to be removed, Bautista said.

He said the ATM has been gathering various files and records pertaining to Desierto, as well as the complainants in charges that had been filed against the Ombudsman in the past.

"We're going to look for these people (complainants) and ask them for the basis of their complaints," Bautista said.

Desierto has been widely criticized for his failure to swiftly act on criminal and administrative complaints filed with his office.

## Joma bullish on talks

By Norman Bordadora

EXILED communist leader Jose Maria Sison is optimistic the stalled peace talks between the government and the National Democratic Front would be resumed following the new Macapagal administration's plan to release 77 political prisoners.

Justice Secretary Hernando Perez said he urged President Macapagal-Arroyo to release the political detainees as a show of goodwill and as a confidence-building measure.

Sison said the NDF would reciprocate by releasing prisoners in the hands of the New People's Army, its military arm.

He was believed to be alluding to Army Maj. Noel Buan and Police Insp. Abelardo Martin who have been in NPA hands for almost two years now.

"It is the policy of the NDF to receive any exploratory team or negotiating panel as soon as designated and dispatched by the new president," the communist leader said.

"The NDF assumes that the resumption of peace negotiations means the revival of all the agreements previously entered into by the government and the NDF," he added.

## Peace hopes high in South

COTABATO CITY—Government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front emissaries yesterday met here for only 30 minutes, but they emerged from the closed door meeting exuding high hopes for the peace process.

President Macapagal-Arroyo sent Undersecretary Jesus Dureza, while the MILF was represented by Islamic religious leaders Abu Halil Yahya and Ustadz Omar Pasigan.

Lawyer Lanang Ali, the rebel group's official representative in its backroom talks dealings, also joined the meeting at the residence of Maguindanao Gov. Zacaria Candao.

Candao once served as legal counsel of the MILF *Jowel Canuday and Edwin Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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# Pimentel urges Macapagal to appoint VP now

By Juliet L. Javellana

SENATE President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. yesterday urged President Macapagal-Arroyo to name her vice president by the weekend so the new official could be confirmed before Congress adjourns Wednesday next week.

Pimentel, one of the candidates for the post, said the delay in the appointment of a VP is not good for the Macapagal administration.

He said if the VP is named after Congress adjourns, confirmation cannot take place until the next, or 12th Congress opens in late July.

He also said the appointment should be made quickly so that if she appoints a senator whose term is up to 2004, the vacancy could be filled during the May 14 elections.

He said Congress would have to pass a resolution to fill the vacant seat and this should be done in time for the May polls.

Pimentel said Ms Macapagal was probably having difficulty making her choice because of "pressure" from former president Fidel Ramos and former speaker Jose de Venecia.

"I'm sure (Ramos) is endorsing Guingona. I think (former) speaker De Venecia is too, and it will be difficult for the President to ignore the endorsement of these people since they belong to the same organization," Pimentel said.

Pimentel said he was not aware if former president Corazon Aquino had endorsed Sen. Franklin Drilon or himself.

Pimentel assailed his rival for the vice presidency, Senate Minority Leader Teofisto Guingona Jr., for asking senators to sign a resolution declaring the Senate leadership vacant and paving the way for the election of a new Senate president, president pro tempore and majority and minority leaders.

Pimentel said Guingona did not have to plot a "coup" since he (Pimentel) had resigned Jan. 16 during the fateful Senate vote on the second envelope of evidence at Estrada's impeachment trial.

Pimentel had said his resignation would take effect when his successor was selected.

"I don't know why they have to keep that (resolution) a secret. It looks like a coup attempt, a maneuver to unseat me when as a matter of fact my resignation stands. All they have to do is to elect my successor. They don't have to do it under the cover of darkness," Pimentel said.

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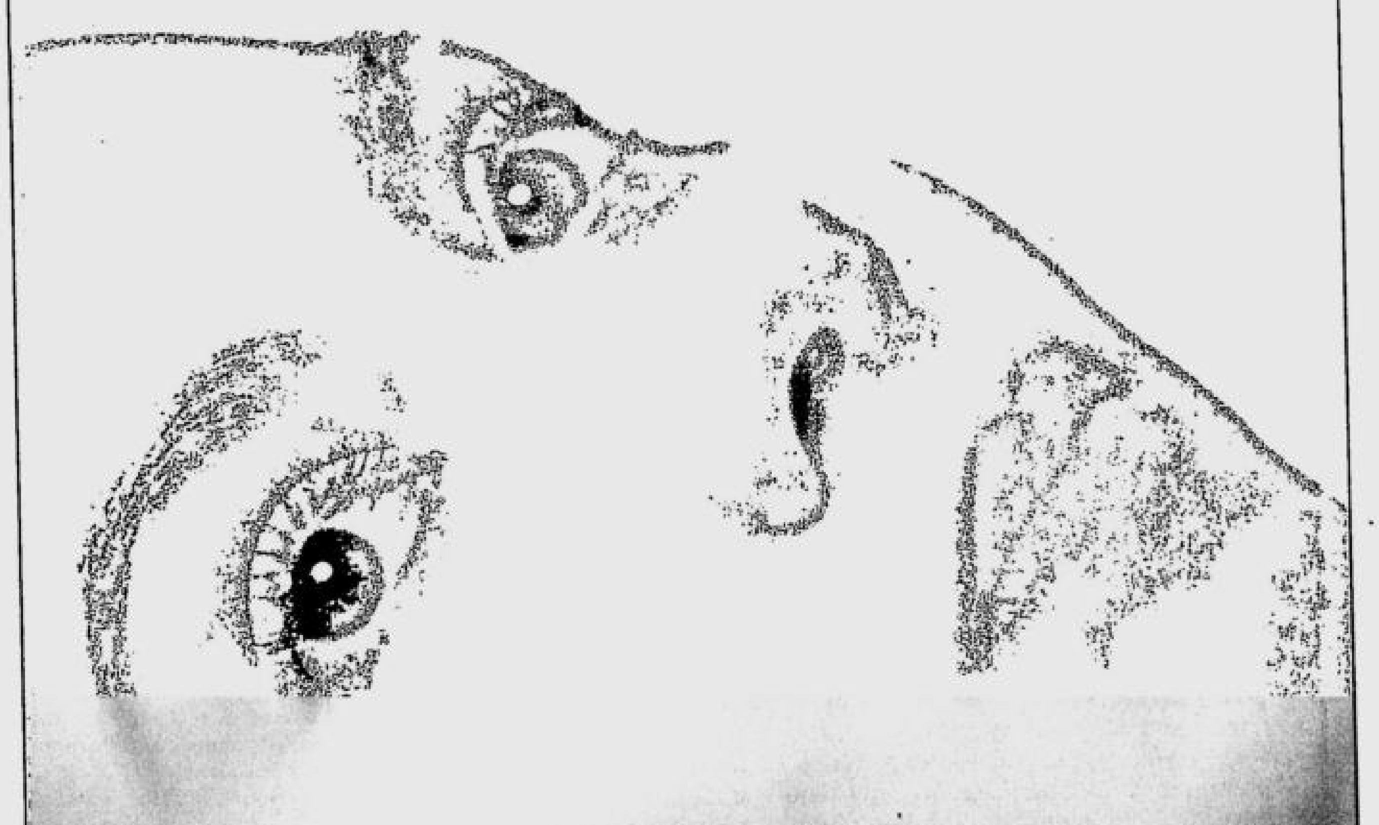

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# OPINION

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# Coup jitters

**EDITORIAL**

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo went on national television the other day to deliver the stern warning that she would "crush" attempts by the "enemies of the state" to destabilize her administration. She issued the warning after 11 days in office amid rumors of a coup that disgruntled military groups said to be loyal to deposed President Joseph Estrada were supposed to be plotting against her administration. By addressing the rumors in her first major national TV appearance since taking office, Ms Macapagal has sent the signal that she was taking the issue of destabilization seriously.

Her tenor, however, was a sharp contrast to the warmongering of her predecessor. She said, "I said it before and I will say it again, I am not a happy warrior, but if forced, I have a sworn duty to protect and defend the Constitution above everything else. I shall crush you." She further said, "To the destabilizers, I extend our hand of peace and reconciliation. Should you, however, persist in your evil designs, I shall say to you: You can try, but you will fail. You cannot win against the people. So, I warn you, think twice."

Unless the President has superior intelligence information not available to the public, her statement sounds like a case of nervousness or overreaction. To be sure, there are pockets of disgruntled officers and soldiers who were not happy over the ejection of Estrada. These include some members of the Presidential Security Group who were pampered by him and seduced by his charisma.

The entire Armed Forces, however, have swung its loyalty and support to Ms Macapagal following its withdrawal of support from Estrada on that fateful Friday before she was sworn into office. In that swing, the general staff, including the major service commanders, and the chain of command solidly committed their loyalty to her as the constitutional successor to Estrada.

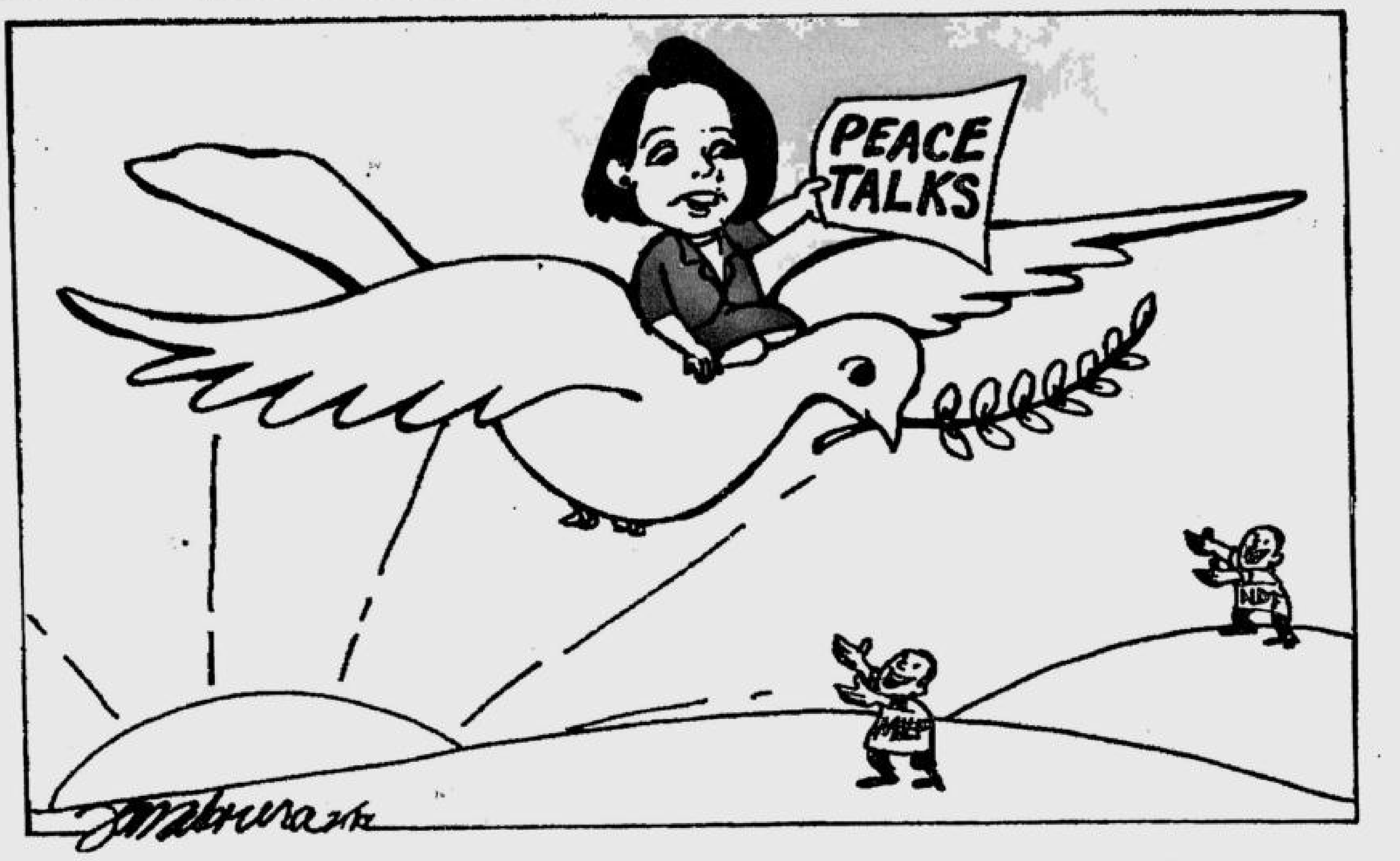
The circumstances were different in 1986. A military mutiny and a four-day struggle took place centered in Camp Crame and Gen. Fidel Ramos and Defense Secretary Juan Ponce Enrile had to rally the Armed Forces to their side. When President Aquino was sworn into office, she inherited a fractious military. The divisions in the military provided a fertile milieu for seven coup attempts. Those attempts failed, but they put the Aquino administration on edge and diverted its attention to day-to-day crisis management.

Obviously, given the serious problems she inherited and the urgency of restoring stability as a condition for economic recovery, Ms Macapagal had the experience of the Aquino administration in mind. There's little doubt about the support of the AFP for the new administration which it helped install in office. The present AFP is not infected by the coup mania that drove the adventurist factions during the Aquino years. For, if a coup was the defining motivation of the Chief of staff, Gen. Angelo Reyes, and the general staff, they could have just seized power for themselves rather than transferring their loyalty to the then Vice President. For this reason, Ms Macapagal has no reason to be nervous about where the AFP's loyalty lies.

The language of Ms Macapagal in her national TV address was tough and clear-cut. Government officials have hinted that Estrada and his loyalists are behind the destabilization moves and are using his colossal loot to finance such plots. But if we know Estrada, he won't spend his plundered assets on an enterprise that he knows to have no chance of success. There is nothing that Estrada would like to do better than to distract the new administration's focus from restoring stability and reviving economy so she would fail.

The coup rumors are fueled by the legal questions raised over whether her assumption of office is constitutional. The Supreme Court has put the stamp of constitutional legitimacy on her presidency. She was sworn into office by Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. Now that Estrada loyalists are challenging Ms Macapagal's legitimacy before it, the Supreme Court can decide and put that issue to rest.

Estrada is on the run. He is facing multiple corruption and plunder complaints with the Ombudsman. That will keep him off-balance. These cases promise to uncover evidence more devastating than those that were introduced during the impeachment trial. His former cronies like Mark Jimenez and Charlie "Atong" Ang have abandoned Estrada and are ready to testify against him. The new administration is better advised to get down to work in rebuilding the economy and confidence in government. There's no need to be jittery over exaggerated coup rumors.



# GMA: Like a mini-pinscher that thinks it's a Doberman

**AS I SEE IT**

*Neal H. Cruz*

THAT'S the girl. President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo corrected her mistake of appointing retired Gen. Lisandro Abadia as national security adviser by withdrawing that appointment. She did right.

In her haste (and probably succumbing to pressure), Macapagal made a mistake and appointed Abadia. But that's all right. Everybody makes mistakes. And it's no sin if you acknowledge the mistake and correct it. That's what Macapagal did.

The sin is when you become too proud to admit that you can make mistakes and become bullheaded and try to justify the error. Which was what Executive Secretary Renato de Villa wanted his President to do. De Villa reportedly wanted Abadia to stay "lest the government be perceived as spineless." De Villa was wrong. Being honest and correcting errors is not being "spineless." Being afraid to admit mistakes and refusing to correct them is the behavior that is spineless. And cowardly, which is not good behavior for ex-soldiers. This early, De Villa already gave his boss wrong advice.

But De Villa's reaction is understandable when we consider that Abadia was his recommendee. I was wrong when I said in an earlier column that it was former President Fidel V. Ramos who was the patron and partner of Abadia. It was De Villa. When De Villa was defense secretary, Abadia was the chief of staff.

Apparently Abadia has better sense than his patron. He claims he returned his appointment to President Macapagal so he would not be a "burden" to this administration. "I do this as an act of self-sacrifice," he declared, "so that this government can go on unhampered by any controversy."

An act of self-sacrifice or forced to good? It looks like it was the latter. Before it was known the other day that Macapagal would recall his appointment, "self-sacrifice" was farthest from the mind of Abadia. He had gone to the Senate to tell Senate President Aquilino Pimentel and Minority Leader Teofisto Guingona that he had been "cleared" by the Ombudsman in the RSBS scam.

As he waited, Abadia told Senate reporters that he would not quit. "This controversy will not prevent me from doing my job," he said. With the Ombudsman's clearance, he said he hoped "Senator Pimentel can help me put this issue to rest so I can move on and work for the President."

But Pimentel said later, "The Ombudsman needs a new pair of eyeglasses."

It was the Senate blue ribbon committee chaired by Pimentel which had recommended the prosecution of Abadia after an investigation of the pension fund scam. The alleged "clearance" by the Ombudsman is misleading because it was based not on the evidence but because the Ombudsman has no jurisdiction over the case.

"He has not been cleared or exonerated of the charges by any court of law. There is always the possibility that he would still be haled before the Sandiganbayan or a civil court—and convicted," said yesterday's INQUIRER editorial.

Nevertheless, Abadia has been praised, by those who don't know the whole story, for returning his appointment "like a true officer and a gentleman." Much better than clinging like a leech to the job, being subjected to criticisms all throughout, going through the wringer before the Commission on Appointments and finally being rejected by it.

The RSBS scam is not the only count against Abadia. He is a retired general, and the Macapagal administration is already being criticized for having too many generals. And he is old, being a retired military officer, whereas Macapagal has said she wants young people in her administration. Abadia would have been a real burden to the Macapagal administration.

* * *

**The first nationally televised speech by President Macapagal had its good and bad points. The good points: the recall of Abadia's appointment and the order to Interior Secretary Joey Lina to investigate in seven days the charges hurled by anti-crime groups against PNP Director General Leandro Mendoza. (But shouldn't Mendoza be suspended or voluntarily go on leave during the investigation? The order to Lina reminds me of Erap's order to Secretary Alfredo Lim to investigate the ownership of the mansions, which investigation predictably ended in a whitewash.)**

**The bad point: The bombastic threat by Macapagal to her perceived enemies: "I shall crush you." That's not becoming of a sweet little girl like her. She sounded like Erap at his bullying worst: "*Huwag n'yo akong susubukan!*" and "*Pupulutin kayo sa kangkungan!*" And look what happened to Erap. *Sino ngayon ang nasa kangkungan?***

**Will presidential speechwriters please stop putting words into her mouth that does not fit her petite personality. "I shall crush you" makes her sound like a bully, a *manduduro*. It makes her sound like a dog that is all bark and has no bite. It makes her sound like a mini-pinscher that thinks it is a Doberman. "Crush" gives the image of tiny bedbugs being crushed between the fingernails. It confuses the people.**

**Presidential Macapagal should remember the saying that "Still waters run deep" and follow President Theodore Roosevelt's advice to "talk softly but carry a big stick."**

* * *

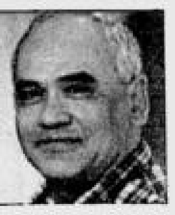
HERE'S a Gloria-Erap joke:

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's reluctance to sleep on Erap's bed reminds me of a recent survey of Malacañang's female staff. One hundred women were asked: "Would you go to bed with Erap?"

Of the 100, two said "yes"; six said "Never"; and 92 said "Never again."

# Discordant voices

**WINDMILLS**



*Jerry Barican*

"EVERY time I appoint someone," rued France's Louis XIV, "I create nine enemies and one ingrate." The Grand Monarch may have had it easy. President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo needs to satisfy not just individuals, but eight entire groups, each of whom thinks she owes them her presidency.

In the President's first week in office, some of these supporters were talking to the media, openly asking what the country could do for them. In an epidemic of self-congratulations, others went from TV station to radio station, beating their breasts about what they, personally, had done for the country. There wasn't, it seemed, a single Cincinnatus among them, who, having saved his country, eschewed power and quietly returned to his farm.

This was the natural after-effect of what was an insurrection in substance, however constitutional it may have been proclaimed by the Supreme Court. As a result, the presidency has been institutionally weakened in favor of Congress, the media and the streets. Single interest groups, from churches to militants to the military, have waxed powerful. At least until the 2004 elections, the government has the feel more of a parliamentary coalition with Ms Macapagal at its head as prime minister rather than as a presidential government. And every coalition partner who is not satisfied with the spoils is going public with threats to bring the new government down.

Even Oscar Lopez, chief executive officer of the Lopez Group of Companies, has publicly expressed concern over the possibility of an Edsa III if there are no substantial changes successfully made by this administration. Since this type of speculation is inherently destabilizing, an alternative might be to review the Constitution, going over the lessons of the past few years. After all, why demand constant caesarians if natural births will do?

How could the impeachment process be improved without emasculating the executive power? How to eliminate the pernicious involvement of the military in politics? Should we openly examine the parliamentary alternative? Reforming the Constitution by debate seems more sensible than amending it by insurrection. Adopting such changes may be too much too soon for too many only days after Edsa II, but thinking about them now is not.

For the next six months, the President seems intent to refocus the nation's attention where it ought to be: rebuilding the economy. The business of the Philippines needs to be business, not politics. As for politics, there are too many stories on the front pages of too many power blocs trying to do this or that.

The President needs to quickly stabilize her administration, move her programs forward and show that she, not her supporters, is in charge. The *trapo* image needs to be corrected. She can use the upcoming 2001 elections to persuade some supporters to run for office in lieu of executive appointments. Consultation is a good thing, but it should not degenerate into the idea of prior consent. And she needs to continue to stay above the fray, a uniter, not a divider.

Nonetheless, the drama of the next few months is not going to be the elections but the trial of former President Estrada, members of his family and some of his associates. Already, Dr. Loi Ejercito has declared her intention to run for senator, in all likelihood as a political challenge to the charges against her family.

Former President Estrada also retains, until the filing deadline, the option to run for senator. The negative for his doing so is that he will give up any lingering legal claims he may have to the presidency, and with it his defense of immunity against the charges filed against him.

But there are also positives for him if he decides to run. He can take the issue to the people. If he is incarcerated, he can campaign from his cell. If he wins, especially by a large plurality, he can portray it as a referendum on the legality of his removal from office. He will then hearten his supporters and dismay his opponents.

Even if he loses, he can make political capital of it. At every step, he can do what his opponents did to him: convert a legal issue into a political one. But for now, there is no indication that the former president is taking this route, preferring it seems, to let the former first lady run proxy for him. But she also faces legal charges.

There is, in brief, room for mischief and distraction, which may explain why some of Estrada's most vociferous critics in the past have expressed their preference of seeing him leave for abroad. They agree with the Medici dictum that a state cannot be governed with paternosters and that ethics need to give way to reasons of state. Some others, however, argue like Cardinal Richelieu that nothing so upholds the law as the punishment of those whose rank is as great as their crimes. With the passage of time, the legal vise is quickly clamping down on the former president, and his options are narrowing.

Already, his closest associates are preparing for their safety by denouncing him. Mark Jimenez has reportedly been singing like a whole choir of sopranos, as are others. The Department of Justice should heed the Integrated Bar of the Philippines' advice to be extremely careful with such offers. They should be accepted only if the potential witness is the "least guilty," something even the inventive Jimenez may have difficulty persuading us, and if there is no other way to prove the case. If the DOJ feels confident it has evidence that can stand on its own, the offer of Jimenez and company should be rejected, cases should be filed against them, and the extradition that he so fears should be given due course.

For now, nothing would serve the country so much as prudence and restraint. Hysterics, which plagued a routine banking shipment to Hong Kong through the Naia, needs to be curtailed. And our penchant for hyperbole, vitriol, second-guessing, untramelled criticism and selfishness needs to be curtailed.

Whatever our politics, the ceaseless threats of Edsa III, IV or XIV bring to mind the warning of Bertold Brecht: "Do not rejoice because the bastard's dead, the bitch that bore him is in heat again." Ours is the womb. Ours the act of creation. Ours the seed of our own success or failure.

# Disgruntlements within Lakas

**POLITICAL TIDBITS**

*Belinda Olivares-Cunanan*

THE GATHERING of political forces yesterday at the Club Filipino in San Juan, presided over by former President Joseph Estrada, drew the groups that were expected to unite as the new political opposition against President Macapagal's party, Lakas-NUCD-Kampi, in the May elections. The coalition is composed of Erap's own Partido ng Masang Pilipino, the LDP of Edgardo Angara and the Nationalist People's Coalition of Eduardo Cojuangco. Because the PMP is a paper party, the new opposition will be composed mainly of the Angara-Cojuangco faction, the LDP-NPC, which is now the "new minority" in the House. Together they have about 70 to 80 members, as against some 125 to 130 belonging to the "Edsa Coalition" that toppled NPC stalwart Arnulfo Fuentebella as speaker and installed Sonny Belmonte.

* * *

**The LDP-NPC combine represents the political reality that Lakas is confronted with. Angara has been batting for exile for Estrada and his families, arguing that this would be best under the politically charged atmosphere after Edsa Dos. But Estrada was emphatic yesterday in declaring that he has no intention to leave and that he remains president since he has not resigned. The support for Macapagal in the face of the LAMP offensive will have to come mainly from her party. But Lakas has to contend with the fact that more than half of Angara's LDP is with the new minority, and they are even now questioning the validity of Macapagal's assumption of the presidency. With Estrada's emergence from self-imposed seclusion, expect this challenge to go into high gear, culminating in the May elections, which are already being built as the referendum on Macapagal's legitimacy.**

* * *

Lakas ought to stay united for its own sake. But as a political group it is beginning to become unsettled. There is palpable disgruntlement in its ranks. Lakas is known as the President's party, but some members note that many of the new appointments come from Reporma and Promdi. Reporma bagged the posts of executive secretary as well as the DOTC and Agriculture (acting Agriculture Secretary Jose Ma. Gerochi, a Reporma guy, will be the most senior undersecretary in the event that Rep. Lito Sarmiento, who's also allied with Reporma, gets the portfolio). The party also has its links to Defense in acting Secretary Eddie Ermita.

* * *

**Then there is the race for the vice president. Lakas is solid in backing its president, Senate Minority Leader Tito Guingona, who his party mates feel deserves the appointment more than the other contender. Lakas leaders openly say that the party would be "frightfully disappointed" if Guingona fails to make it. They stress his consistency, loyalty, courage as opposition leader and service record in two branches of government, as well as the fact that the vice presidency would be Tito's crowning glory, as he is already in his early 70s. Last Tuesday, the members of the House majority lunched with President Macapagal and told her of their desire to see their party president appointed as vice president. She reportedly told them she was still praying over it. Lakas members fear they are being marginalized.**

* * *

In the meantime, various groups are pushing for Senate President Nene Pimentel, while Sen. Franklin Drilon has a powerful backer in former President Cory Aquino. Both are good and capable leaders, but there's no question that appointing Guingona makes more sense for many reasons. One is that both Pimentel and Drilon have presidential ambitions. If either is appointed, what is going to happen in 2004? Would he fight Macapagal? Drilon resented reports in the media questioning his close links to Ed Angara, who was his senior partner in the ACCRA law office. To Drilon's credit, when the chips were down, he decisively split from Angara over the Estrada issue, risking—and losing—his Senate presidency but their continuing close ties remain an issue that Frank cannot escape, especially now that question about what to do with the coconut levy, which was packaged by ACCRA in their time, are being revived. On the other hand, Pimentel cannot deny his close links to Estrada over the past two and a half years.

* * *

**Estrada delivered yesterday his usual spiel about his love for the *masang Pilipino*. But that same morning, the newspapers headlined his 15 bank accounts in practically every bank operating in the country, under six different false names. Private prosecutors led by Ateneo-trained lawyer Ricardo "Toy" Nepomuceno, who was once Guingona's deputy at the Department of Justice, said that so far about P10 to P15 billion of Estrada's unexplained wealth have been identified; and this still does not include his dollar-denominated accounts as well as those in the name of his mistresses. The lawyers have said since the start of the impeachment trial that it's those dollar-denominated accounts that are tougher to identify. They also said that there may be many more accounts they have not yet identified.**

* * *

At the oath taking of Cabinet members, Justice Secretary Hernando Perez told this columnist that Estrada and his families were believed to have amassed some P40 billion in unexplained wealth. I would have fainted at the mention of this gargantuan amount, except that many months earlier, Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson in meeting with us media women said Estrada's wealth could amount to about P50 billion. At that time Singson's claim sounded incredible, but now it's beginning to look accurate.

* * *

**What is also incredible is that Estrada began making those deposits just two months after he assumed office. This reminds me of how the Marcoses began stashing their loot in Swiss banks under false names barely two years after Marcos came to power.**

**As Rep. Joker Arroyo pointed out, Estrada's unexplained wealth is bound to hound the candidacy of former First Lady Loi Ejercito. While it is true that she will gain sympathy votes due to her loyalty as a wife and the fate that befell her family, still she will be hard put to answer charges of ill-gotten wealth, especially since it would be difficult to reconcile her own substantial deposits with Statement of Assets and Liabilities showing they had only P35 million in assets.**

* * *

I have written about tonight's repeat show at the newly renovated Alegria Lounge of the Holiday Inn on UN Avenue, Manila, of the Performing Artists International, dubbed "Two Sides of a Song." This will feature classical artists led by international pianist Raul Sunico, interpreting the classical and popular versions of well-known compositions from Chopin, Saint Saens, Rachmaninoff, etc. I inadvertently omitted mentioning the name of one of Asia's foremost saxophonists, Tots Tolentino, who will jam with Sunico in George Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" and do a solo of "Story of Three Loves." Tolentino is a magna cum laude graduate of the Berkley College of Music in Boston, Massachusetts.

# The 'new' Gloria

**AT LARGE**

*Rina Jimenez-David*

MY congratulations to whoever has been hired as President Macapagal's speech consultant. That was quite an impressive delivery Tuesday of her first televised, nationwide message to the nation. What struck me most about the performance, more than her threat of "crushing" the enemies of the state, was that hardly any trace of the "old" Macapagal was in evidence.

Gone was the monotone, bordering on the grating, that used to annoy the hell out of me, and judging from unsolicited comments, so many others. Actually, the changes were beginning to surface even during her public interviews, including the first press conference she gave in Malacañang. In all these appearances, she has seemed unusually animated, keeping her tendency to flare up and let irritation creep into her voice successfully under check.

But it was during the Tuesday address that the "new" Macapagal emerged fully, the flat, harsh tones of her monotone lightening and taking on a more pleasant rhythm. Most impressive, though, were the dramatic flourishes with which she punctuated her address, complete with gestures and matching facial expression.

What emerged was a more human, accessible President, but with impressive authority and gravitas, a trait that she has worked all of her political life to deserve.

* * *

**IF YOU think about it, President Macapagal has had a lot of perceptual barriers to hurdle on her way to being taken seriously. Small in stature, she admitted, in what I thought was a poignant moment that unfortunately was allowed to slip by, that she only "got over" her being "undertall" when she was already an Undersecretary at the Department of Trade and Industry. Wow, I thought, by that time, she had already racked up a master's degree in economics, was teaching at the Ateneo and was raising three children! What else did she have to prove to herself to believe that her height no longer mattered? Maybe it's this defensiveness, born of something she really had no control over, that led Macapagal to adopt the prickly personality that has led some observers to describe her as "as charming and cuddly as a calculator." When I told a friend about this amusing observation, she turned to me and said, "Well, look where having a charming President led us. Maybe it's time we had a President who didn't rely solely on charm for a change." From an e-mail group comes the observation that despite their decision to abandon the Erap administration, former Estrada partisans like Gen. Angelo Reyes still sought to soften the blow, declaring publicly that Erap was a "good" president, and negotiating for a "dignified exit" for the fallen leader. Perhaps it was because the former President nurtured his personal relations with Cabinet members and advisers that had won their enduring loyalty, the e-mail correspondent observed. And this personal warmth may have been the reason Erap also won the abiding support and idolatry of the masses, who still consider him their champion. Could it be that what we're seeing these days is but the start of a "charm offensive" on the part of the new President? A panel of political scientists has supposedly advised Macapagal "not to smile so much." But I beg to disagree. She must smile as much as she can, for winning the hearts, and not just the grudging acceptance, of the poor majority is imperative in these the early days of her administration. With the Pompadoured One still baldly claiming that he is still the legal president, she needs to win decisively in the emotional and not just legal sense. Congratulations for the makeover, then. I just hope it goes beyond the cosmetic and reflects, as well, where it really counts, in programs, policies and real change.**

* * *

NAMFREL, the Bishops-Businessmen's Conference and many other multisectoral organizations have formally nominated Emigdio Tanjuatco for chair of the Commission on Elections and lawyers Resurreccion Borra and Jose Luis Martin "Chito" Gascon for Comelec commissioners.

With elections coming up in May, and with Comelec chair Harriet Demetriou and two other Comelec commissioners retiring, it's essential to appoint people of competence, integrity, probity and experience to the poll body. The coming elections, after all, will test once more the durability of our institutions and democratic process.

Tanjuatco, best known these days as the lawyer of Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson, is a former congressman who chaired the House Electoral Reforms and Suffrage Committee and principal author of the bill, later R.A. 8436, calling for the computerization of the ballot-counting starting with this year's polls.

Borra, on the other hand, served as executive director of the Comelec until his retirement last year. He was a 40-year veteran in the body, starting as a field attorney in Rizal in 1963.

Gascon, a familiar figure onstage during the four days of "People Power" at the Edsa Shrine, was chair of the UP Student Council and was appointed as the youngest member of the Constitutional Commission in 1986. He also served as youth sectoral representative in the House of Representatives.

The three certainly make for excellent choices to the Comelec, and given their knowledge of and experience in the electoral process, wouldn't need such an extensive learning curve, a phase the country can't afford for the Comelec head and commissioners, given the crucial exercise in May.

I wonder, though, what they plan to do, if appointed, with the "one-woman wrecking crew" in the Comelec, an Erap appointee, who managed to throw a spanner into the work of bringing the Comelec into the 21st Century. Thanks to her, the Comelec must cope with 21st century elections with 20th (if not 19th) Century methods.

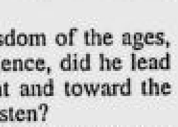
* * *

**HERE'S an early Valentine's Day gift. Log on to www. erapresign.homestead.com and get yourself a treat as familiar figures from the impeachment trial morph into the most amusing forms. Have a good laugh on me, and the makers of the site!**

# Presidents and 'spiritual advisers'

**HUMAN FACE**

*Ma. Ceres P. Doyo*



I CAUGHT the last portion of Channel 7's all-women round-table interview with President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and found it very spontaneous, almost too casual. The President seemed "game *na* game."

One of the questions asked was: "Do you have a spiritual adviser?" Good question, I thought. Ms Macapagal thought about it for a few seconds and then blurted out impishly, "Why, who among you here has a spiritual adviser?"

Everybody laughed. Great answer, I thought.

Ms Macapagal's answer could mean several things. She didn't need one—not the kind that ousted President Estrada had anyway. Having one obviously didn't work for her predecessor. He got worse. *Lumala.*

Ms Macapagal's answer could also mean that if she had one, she was not going to broadcast it to the world.

What's a spiritual adviser anyway? We know that the former president had his legal adviser, national security adviser, even an adviser on Latin American affairs and on legalizing illegal gambling. Then a new kind of adviser glided into the Estrada presidency. This was the so-called spiritual adviser. This one did not sit in Cabinet meetings but he knew the way to the presidential corridor. Who knows what his job description was.

For this "spiritual post" Estrada had El Shaddai leader Brother Mike Velarde whose flock could be called upon to cheer Estrada on and to daunt the church hierarchy that frowned on his nocturnal habits, extramarital habits, working habits and other bad habits. Estrada basked in El Shaddai's intoxicating amens and alleluias. Velarde was, for many ambitious politicians, a sought-after booster, not so much for his advice as for the sea of hands waving in the moonlight.

Was Velarde called "spiritual adviser" because he was supposed to be a spiritual man advising Estrada on temporal matters, that is, politics? Or because he advised Estrada on spiritual matters and looked after his soul? Did he help Estrada discern on matters pertaining to the spirit that would have had a bearing on his leadership? Did Estrada open his heart to him? Did Velarde let him drink from the wisdom of the ages, did he take him on a desert experience, did he lead him from the darkness to the light and toward the straight and narrow? Did Estrada listen?

For a while it looked like having a spiritual adviser/crowd drawer/public anointer gave legitimacy to many a politician's actions. Estrada needed to say he had one, especially because of the moral issues raised against him. Very much like those government officials who broadcast their piety by decking their offices with fake votive candles and garishly dressed images of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. Is this to announce that they are as pure as distilled water?

I had a little talk on the topic of spiritual advisers with Sister Amelia Vasquez, dean of Maryhill School of Theology. The soft-spoken Harvard-trained Vasquez has a background in spiritual formation. A true spiritual adviser, she said, is supposed to help you seek the truth and find the areas of unfreedom within you. But the person being advised must be willing to go through the process toward spiritual maturity. Alas, there are people who have little moral capacity and are incapable of discernment, whose level of moral development is in the infantile stage.

I say these types are not to be condemned, but led by the hand to maturity. They also need to be told loudly, please do not be president. In the case of Estrada, the presidency turned out to be an occasion for sin. Sure, no one is beyond redemption, but for Estrada the message had to be in bold itals: ***Please get out of there. For your sake, for our sake.*** As a holy writer said, if it causes you to sin, for chrissakes, cut it off.

Persons in high positions might need a spiritual adviser/confidante. Even the Pope has one. I think President Cory Aquino, on certain matters, quietly sought the advise of Jesuit theologian Fr. Catalino Arevalo. Some persons whom I consider advanced in the spiritual life say they need a guide, a guru, to help them deepen their prayer life.

India's Nehru had Mahatma Gandhi when India was in the throes of becoming independent. Gandhi was not simply an adviser to a leader, he was the bigger leader who led the movement to end the British Raj. Nehru and Gandhi's relationship is described in Collins and Lapierre's "Freedom at Midnight": "Gandhi had been, in a sense, Nehru's guru. It was Gandhi who had re-Indianized (the England-educated) Nehru, sending him into the villages to find the real face of his homeland and to let the fingers of his soul touch India's sufferings. Whenever the two men were in the same place, Nehru would spend at least half an hour sitting at (Gandhi's) feet, sometimes talking, sometimes listening, sometimes just looking and thinking. Those were, for Nehru, moments of intense spiritual satisfaction, perhaps the closest brush his agnostic heart would ever have with religion."

Nicholas II and Alexandra of czarist Russia had Rasputin, the "mad monk" with little education who immersed himself in religion and later became a court favorite because of his supposed healing powers. He peddled debauchery and superstition, meddled in politics and was assassinated by patriotic Russian noblemen.

And there was Rev. Jesse Jackson who was advising the sexually deviant US President Clinton. Around that time, Jackson was himself having an extramarital affair that, well, produced a child.

Advisers can only do so much. Gandhi said, and our new President could take his advice: "A leader is useless when he acts against the promptings of his own conscience, surrounded as he must be by people holding all kinds of views. He will drift like an anchorless ship, if he has not the inner voice to hold him firm and guide him."

That inner voice is heard in the silence, in the stillness.

# Bluskies from the sky

**YOUNGBLOOD**

*Edwin Lee L. Barinaga*

*We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.*

THE FARMER woke up to the familiar sound of the cock's crow. He sat up abruptly on the tattered *banig* he shared with his wife and five children. He stifled a yawn, careful not to wake his wife up. She had been febrile for the last two weeks and had been coughing for a month or so. The previous day had been tiring for her. She did the laundry for four families in the subdivision nearby.

He gently stroked her forehead and rearranged the green woolen blanket over her frail body. The blanket was a wedding gift from his in-laws, and even after 18 years of constant use, it still didn't needed patching up unlike most of the other beddings they owned.

He slowly crept out of the mosquito net and carefully tucked it under the *banig*. Then he stood up and smiled as he heard his back joints pop. By the light of the lamppost a few meters from their window, he stared at his family, sleeping peacefully on the floor.

After a while he went to the southern portion of their three-by-four-meter house which served as the kitchen and dining room and removed his shirt. He washed his face and went to the cardboard box which contained all his clothes and took out one of the three "decent" shirts he had: a black polo shirt. His wife bought it from a neighbor who runs a small RTW business. When she gave it to him a month before on his birthday, they nearly had an argument. He told her he did not need a new shirt and asked her where she got the money to buy it. She said she had saved money for the past several months, and suggested that he use it whenever they would go to church. He became teary-eyed and hugged her, saying nothing.

He went to their dining table and finished two loaves of bread in a matter of seconds. His empty stomach told his brain to tell his hand to get some more loaves and stuff it in his mouth. But the farmer knew that if he did that, his two youngest children would be going to school without any *baon*.

He made his way to the door very carefully and got his son's schoolbag which was hanging on the door. He took out a pencil and pad paper and tore out a page. He went to the window and fiddled with the pencil. It had been a while since he last used a writing instrument. He started writing in with an unsure hand:

"*Pupunta ako sa Maynila. Pupunta ako sa Edsa. Sabihin mo kay Nardo hindi ako makakasama sa pagtabas mamaya. Ingatan mo ang mga bata.*"

He left the note on the dining table and used an empty milk can as a paperweight. He went out of their house and started walking toward the highway where he would try to hitch a ride on a truck delivering rice to Manila. He could not afford the bus fare.

II

The bank manager woke up to the shrill sound of his talking alarm clock saying: "Six twenty-five a.m., six twenty-five a.m." He turned it off, pushed aside the navy blue comforter and rolled off the queen-sized bed. He stood facing the bed and stretched his arms. The sight of the empty bed made him miss his wife more. A pediatrician, she was in New York attending a three-day seminar. She would be back in two weeks after visiting her sister in Nevada and he couldn't wait to see her.

He jumped into the shower and turned the handle. He jumped as cold water hit his skin. He stepped aside and turned on the water heater. He waited shivering for a few seconds, tested the water and resumed his bath. Afterwards, he shaved by the large mirror above the sink. He then wrapped his towel around his waist and went down to the kitchen.

He opened the giant refrigerator and scanned its numerous contents. He spied the plate of pizza that was left over from last night's dinner and placed it inside the microwave oven. He took the box of orange juice and drank straight from it. "If my wife were here, she'd kill me," he thought. He took out the two slices of pizza, put one on top of the other and ate quickly. Then he washed his hands in the sink and went back to his room.

There he opened his huge cabinet and took out a black long-sleeved polo, gray suit and matching slacks. He decided to go to the Edsa shrine after his lunch meeting at the office.

He combed his hair, got his suitcase from the study room and went to the garage and greeted his driver who was waxing his silver-gray Mercedes Benz. He chided his driver saying, "*Hindi iyan ang gagamitin natin ngayon, yung* Toyota. *Di ba,* Wednesday *ngayon*?"

His driver scratched his head, smiled and said, "*Oo nga pala 'no. Okay lang, bukas hindi ko na kailangan linisin yang Chedeng.*" And they had a good laugh over that.

III

The medical student quickly changed into his white pants and the black Metallica shirt he borrowed from his brother. He had just assisted in an appendectomy at the operating room. He folded his blue scrubsuit and stuffed it in his knapsack together with his operating room slippers.

He was a bit worried. It was already 11:34 a.m. and his classmates had already left for Edsa. Now he would have to commute on the LRT.

He went out of the dressing room and bumped into a second-year surgery resident. "*Pupunta ba kayo,* ma'am?" he asked her.

"*Hindi ko pa alam,*" she answered. "*May dalawa pang* cases *na nakapila sa* O.R. 7 *eh. Pareho pa namang* cholecystectomy, *yari na. Isigaw mo na lang ako.*"

The medical student laughed and said, "*Oo ba, basta burahin niyo yung* late *ko sa* attendance logbook *eh.*"

The resident punched him playfully on his shoulders and they parted ways. He half-jogged toward Taft Avenue and went up the steps of the Pedro Gil LRT station.

IV

The farmer, the banker and the student arrived almost at the same time at the Edsa Shrine and took their places in the crowd beside each other. They joined the thousands in chanting "Erap Resign! Erap resign!" Bread was being distributed among the ralliers on Edsa by some generous people. Then packets of Blueskies crackers came down raining from the sky. One flew straight to where the three were standing. They all raised their hands and all three of them got a hold on it.

They smiled at each other. Over the deafening roar of the crowd, the farmer shouted: "*Hati-hati tayo!*"

The banker opened the plastic wrapper and offered the first piece to the student.

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*Eugene Lee L. Barinaga, 24, is a fourth-year medical student at UP-PGH. This essay was based on an inspiring incident he witnessed on Edsa when an executive and a cigarette vendor caught a packet of crackers at the same time and decided to share its contents.*

**THEY SAID**

## Debt to the people

"The government has a debt to the people, especially the youth, so all those who are called upon to serve must serve."

***—Sen. Raul Roco, explaining his acceptance of the post of education secretary***

## Commitments

"We have to deliver all our commitments to the people at Edsa."

***—Executive Secretary Renato de Villa***

## Forgiveness and punishment

"These are the usual conditions for the forgiveness given by God through the Church. This forgiveness does not take away the punishment necessary."

***—Archbishop Orlando Quevedo, expressing agreement with the filing of criminal charges against ousted President Estrada***

## Notice to Youngblood contributors

Contributors to Youngblood who haven't received their checks are requested to inquire with the PDI cashier on Friday.

# That's entertainment

**THERE'S THE RUB**

*Conrado de Quiros*

I GOT Celeste Legaspi's letter early last week, but what with one thing and another, I never got around to putting it out or replying to it. I'm glad my editor published it in the Letters section last Monday.

I do most assuredly owe entertainers an apology. I read my "Dear President" column again, and some parts there do tend to indict all entertainers in the same breath as *trapos*, or at least put them on the same footing. Legaspi has every right to feel raw and angry. I cannot excuse it by saying that I just dashed off that column after hearing Macapagal's uninspiring inaugural speech, and it therefore carries with it the strengths and weaknesses of pure intuition. Neither can I excuse it by saying that I did mention the individual entertainers (and soldiers) who came at the 11th hour and passed themselves off as the heroes of the day. I should have been more explicit and said I referred to them in particular and not to the whole tribe of entertainers (and soldiers).

I was aware of the difference. Certainly, I could not have meant Danny Javier, Jim Paredes and Buboy Garovillo, who never lost their libertarian instincts or wavered from their defense of this country's freedoms from way back. They were at Bahay Kalinaw during our press freedom concert in August 1999, a monumentally courageous act in light of Erap's tight hold on the entertainment industry, which had earlier driven the movie producers to mount an ad boycott against the INQUIRER. I remain profoundly grateful to the musicians and theater people who took part in it.

Certainly, I could not have meant Joey Reyes, who was indefatigable in his efforts to swing the tide of opinion among movie folk against the bad movie called the Erap administration. He was all over the e-mail expressing his anguish, hope and resolve (not necessarily in that order) to finish a project that made the sentiments of the thinking folk in the show-biz community known to the public. I could not have meant Rosanna Roces who bared her soul to the nation long before other show-biz folk did, in reply to a president who said all she did was bare her body to the peanut-crunching gallery, and gave me restless nights debating which was the more awesome sight, her body or her soul.

And certainly, I could not have meant the entertainers who lent their talents to ABS-CBN's Christmas special last December, a show that steered clear of the usual Yuletide platitudes and strove to say something more meaningful to a country riven by crisis. Or indeed, the talents of GMA-7 and the other networks, who began to express their opposition to Erap before the end of the year last year, which was still perilous times.

I can only hope they did not feel referred to by my column. I have every respect for entertainers, and hold artists, which I deem many entertainers to be, in the greatest awe. I've always said in my columns that contrary to Plato, the Republic has no more valuable citizens than artists. I've always said that musicians should never feel inferior to politicians who hire them for their daughters' debuts because they are superior to them. We do not now remember the noblemen (a completely gratuitous title) who put food on Mozart's table. We do remember Mozart (a monumentally gifted musician) who put "Eine Kleine Nachtmusik" in our ears.

To the true entertainers, I am sorry.

But having said all this, I must also ask Legaspi and other artists to discover two things.

The first is a sense of proportion. True, entertainers were given a special gift by God: the gift of grace and music. But so too were the activists, the NGO workers and the starving members of people's organizations given a gift by God: the gift of vigilance and fortitude. It was the latter who huddled in the cold and dark, manning the ramparts of freedom, when most of their compatriots, entertainers above all, kept to the warmth and light, which were to be found near the vicinity of Malacañang. That they were quite literally swept off the stage they quite metaphorically built when the *trapos* and the born-again AFP officials and, yes, the entertainers, arrived in all their finery, that is unspeakable injustice.

I grant that is not the fault of the entertainers. But I did not hear any entertainer there express any sense of embarrassment at this pass. I did not hear any entertainer there show a symbolic *pasintabi*—we Filipinos normally do that by cutting an imaginary line with our outstretched hands while passing through two people talking, and say "*makikiraan po*"—to the people who had more than symbolically cleared a path for them to that stage. What I did see were Martin Nievera and company taking to the limelight when the crowd had swelled to its fullest and regaling them with song and dance. Legaspi is right, I do not have a window to look into other people's souls. I do not know what lay in Nievera's heart and in those of other entertainers when they rose to greet the crowd. But I do have eyes to see the effects of what they did. The light fell on the entertainers, and darkness fell on the trailblazers.

The second is a sense of mortification. Surely it cannot be unknown to Legaspi that entertainers have also contributed epically to making government and politics the joke they are today. I sympathize with her completely when she says that she loathes *trapos* and cannot abide anyone lumping her profession with them. But I do not see either how she speaks for her whole community when she says this. It was the entertainment industry that produced the worst *trapo* of all, who is Erap, and it is the entertainment industry that continues to produce the worst *trapos* of all, who are the senators and congressmen and governors and mayors the has-beens in the movies have become. They are the worst *trapos* of all because they cultivate the worst of traditional Philippine politics, and prey on the worst instincts of the Filipino voter, which is to patronize the popular, the glib and slick, the purveyor of smoke and shadows.

The entertainers have been crowding out good people from public office all this time. To see them crowd out the people who toiled in the night when Edsa II was just a mote in the eye of Zeus, or an Eraption in the eyes of the nation, without any one of them being filled with a sense of *diyahe*, that is a little too much for my nerves. Can you blame anyone for unburdening himself the way I have? Can you blame anyone for thinking that the entertainers' aggressiveness was all in a day's work?

Can you blame anyone for saying that's entertainment?

* * *

Comments are welcome at dequiros@vasia.com

# Tse!

**PINOY KASI**

*Michael L. Tan*

LAST Tuesday I wrote about "revolutionary humor," describing the jokes that went around during Edsa II. The column brought in quite a few letters so I'm going to respond to some of the issues raised.

First, I should thank Alex Ilagan for pointing out that the correct address for ASAR, the anti-Erap group of artists which produced "The White Album," is www.asarproject.org and not "asar project.com" as I had indicated. That site will direct you to another webpage where you can download the songs in mp3 format.

Several overseas Filipinos wrote to ask for compilations of Edsa jokes as well as the spoof photos. I'm afraid I really don't have the time to do that, but maybe the INQUIRER can pick up on this. Alternatively, some website owner might want to host a depository of this revolutionary humor so people can just download the stuff. If anyone ever sets up such a site, just write me so I can publicize the address.

Several readers and friends called my attention to one unpleasant aspect of revolutionary humor that I didn't write about: homophobia. Unfortunately, it seems the INQUIRER itself had its lapses. Last Jan. 23, we carried a cartoon to accompany a front-page article on the search for a vice president. The lampoon had this caption: "*OK na kahit maski sino sa kanila, wag lang artista,* dancer, *luka-luka, bading at basketbolista.*" (Anyone will do, except artists, dancers, the mentally imbalance, homosexuals and basketball players.)

Lagablab (Lesbians and Gay Legislative Advocacy Network) wrote to the INQUIRER to complain about the cartoon and Raul Palabrica, our readers' advocate, has since responded: "The INQUIRER apologizes to the gays and lesbians for whatever anguish or embarrassment they may have suffered because of the cartoon."

The INQUIRER's cartoon was mild compared to what actually happened out at the rallies, especially in the aftermath of the "second envelope" incident. Lagablab points out that there were "homophobic chants and posters" at the rally: "Osmeña Bading," "Maceda Bading" and "Erap Bakla." During one chanting session, Lagablab activists say they sent a note to the rally organizers to protest the homophobia but nothing came out of it.

Lesbians and gays have every right to complain. Long before it became fashionable, lesbian and gay activists were organizing oust-Erap activities. There were ad-hoc groups like Glare (Gays and Lesbians for the Removal of Erap) and Galit Erap (Gays and Lesbians for the Immediate Tsugi of Erap), with activists marching down the streets chanting TSE!, Tsugi-in si Erap! (Oust Erap!).

The Lagablab statement explains what was so offensive about the chanting: "What we fail to understand is why our homosexual identity is used as a symbol of derision. We are not privy to the truth behind the alleged homosexuality of Maceda and Osmeña, but we do know that they are condemnable solely for their lack of integrity. We are also aware of Estrada's despicably corrupt administration, yet we do not equate his crookedness to homosexual identity. The use of our identity to take a dig and insult these crooks is telling of how our society sees homosexuals: as decadent, deplorable, second-class citizens."

It's a point well made, and worth repeating. The "Erap bakla" slogan is offensive because it equates corruption and venality with homosexuality. Moreover, such chanting reinforces the prejudice that's already out there in our homes, offices and schools. For example, it is still very common to hear Filipino parents scolding a crying son: "*Ano ka ba—bakla?*" equating crying with weakness and weakness with homosexuality.

The problem is not just homophobia but stereotyping. Clara Rita Padilla, a lawyer working with WomanLead, also wrote to the INQUIRER about "offensive epithets" used at Edsa, e.g., "Oreta pokpok" which equates shameful and depraved behavior with being a whore. Just as calling Erap *bakla* is an insult to gay men, calling a politician a whore degrades the prostitutes who at least make an honest living. The whores may be selling their bodies, but they've kept their souls.

In retrospect, I think the INQUIRER cartoon was only reflecting public sentiment, politically incorrect as this might be, and just as I would argue against homophobia, I would say too that calling for a blanket ban on artists and basketball players from running for public office is unfair. Sure, we've suffered from many of these incompetent show-biz types being voted into office, but there are also many lawyers, physicians and accountants among the ranks of corrupt and flea-brained officials (my apologies to fleas). Which reminds me, Philip, a *bakla* officemate, tells me that following the "Osmeña bading" chants, a small group of *baklas* began their own refrain: "*Hindi bading si John. Hayop siya.*" (John is not *bakla*. He's an animal.)

One could argue for an apology to animals but let's not descend into contrived political correctness. Words like "*bakla*" become offensive only in a certain context, such as in a large political rally where the words are used to insult and stereotype. Easily, the context could be different. Several weeks back, an ABS-CBN newscast featured Philip in a rally as part of a gay contingent. In a snap interview, Philip questioned how Erap could be called a real man ("*tunay na lalake*") after all that he had done. Philip came to the office the next day to a heroes' welcome: "*Bakla! Ang galing galing mo!*" (You were great, bakla!) Used this way, "*bakla*" was a term of praise, endearment and respect. Osmeña, Maceda and Erap would be so lucky.

* * *

Comments can be sent to tibotbading@pinoykasi.org

LETTERS

# RP should lead transition in Asean

I HAVE the honor of congratulating President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo on her assumption to the office of President of the Philippines.

I am confident that, under her competent leadership, the Philippines will continue, with renewed vigor and determination, to support Asean and the regionalism that it represents. I am sure that she shares the conviction of other Southeast Asians that that support is fully in the interest of the Philippines as well as of the region itself.

The Asean secretariat and I place ourselves at her disposal and that of the Philippine government in ensuring the effectiveness of the Philippines' participation in the affairs of Asean.

I look forward to calling on Her Excellency at the earliest possible opportunity.

As a Filipino, may I express my heartfelt hope that her presidency and the circumstances under which she assumed it signify a transition toward strengthened institutions and processes of government, more substantive participation of the people in their governance and greater accountability of those in authority. This is a transition that other nations of East Asia are today undergoing in different forms and at varying paces. I trust that, under her administration, the Philippines will be leading the way.

It is in this spirit that I extend to her my best wishes for the success of her administration and the assurances of my highest esteem and consideration.—**RODOLFO C. SEVERINO JR., secretary-general, Association of Southeast Asian Nations, Jakarta, Indonesia**

## Where does Macapagal stand on urgent issues?

SINCE Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo took over the presidency, the people have yet to hear her clear views on the pressing issues of the day. She has given nothing but vague comments on the people's clamor for the indictment and incarceration of the ousted president, Joseph Estrada, to say nothing of his cronies, the Marcoses, and the worst human rights violators such as Panfilo Lacson. Her platform of government has so far been composed of obligatory gestures, motherhood statements, but nothing about her plans for the working people and the poor's livelihood and welfare.

She has been noncommittal on the call for the release of the 250 political prisoners. This not only casts doubt on her good will, but also underscores her growing reluctance to revive the peace talks.

In fact, her only commitment so far has been on garbage and on waste disposal. We are aware that the garbage problem is fouling the air in the metropolis, and this should be addressed quickly. But surely, Macapagal could have made some policy announcements on more important issues such as Estrada's prosecution and arrest. It should not take her too long to make a definite decision on this crucial issue.

We remind her that we marched on Edsa and Mendiola to rid the country of a corrupt president, not to put her in power. Now that she is in Malacañang, we expect her, as the highest official of the land, to carry out the people's verdict against Estrada. She has done so little along this line.

We are not asking for quick fixes to the country's innumerable problems. What we are asking for are, at least, the President's clear-cut commitments and initial first steps. She has been busy with completing her Cabinet, but she has not even spoken of the more pressing concerns of the people: poverty, unemployment, homelessness, landlessness.

We demand to know her policy directions, her thrusts, so that we may know where she positions herself, and, consequently, where the people must stand.

Because of her silence on these issues, we are beginning to think that this new administration is fast shaping up to be like its predecessor—not in the sense that it is headed by a president who gambles, drinks and womanizes, but in the sense that it is headed by a President who wants to maintain the exploitative status quo and preserve the interests of the ruling elite.

Instead of assuring the people that she will put a stop to the oil price hikes, rising unemployment, demolition of urban poor communities and the militarization in the countryside, she hastened to reaffirm her commitment to the foreign multilateral agencies of the IMF-WB and the World Trade Organization.

We wonder now if her slowness in addressing the basic issues of the people is not just a matter of style but actually deliberate. Her delay in bringing Estrada to justice is similar to the Aquino administration's delay in prosecuting the Marcoses more than a decade ago. And as the Ramos administration failed to prosecute Marcos and his cronies, now Macapagal appears undetermined to go after Estrada and his cronies. Like all three presidents before her, Macapagal seems eager to accommodate and kowtow to foreign monopoly capitalist interest, and carry out destructiv, globalization policies.

This early, we give the Macapagal administration a fair warning: Do not tempt fate and court the people's ire. Do not be like the past administrations, which gave the people empty promises and false hopes of development and progress. Do not be like the Estrada administration which carried out a vendetta against the Filipino people by waging all-out war against their livelihood through mass layoffs, oil price hikes and union busting; and made war against their persons by breaking up picket lines and conducting bombings in Mindanao.

We are prepared to push on with the people's agenda for genuine social change, and continue the struggle in the streets not just in Metro Manila but all over the country.—**CRISPIN BELTRAN, chair, Kilusang Mayo Uno**

## A grand plan to keep second envelope sealed

THE JAN. 25 issue of the INQUIRER carried the speech of Sen. Francisco Tatad delivered in the Senate last Jan. 22. In that speech, Tatad tried to explain why he voted against the opening of the controversial second envelope.

I do not wish to argue about the constitutionality of his decision, but I just want to ask him these questions: (1) The first envelope which was related to the first was allowed to be opened, so why the fuss about the second? (2) The senator-judges did not know the contents of the second envelope, shouldn't this have been opened first to find out what it contained and then the objection can be made to its introduction as evidence if warranted? (3) Why did Tatad not allow Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. to rule on the opening of the second envelope? Why did he have to put the issue to a vote? Was it because he knew the decision of the Chief Justice and that it would be contrary to what he wanted?

The fact that Tatad and Enrile insisted on the voting instead of allowing the Chief Justice to rule on the matter,(which at that time was the normal thing to do) shows a grand plan to thwart the opening of the envelope. The justification of the 11 senators on the constitutionality of their decision is, to say the least, a lot of crap.

Why don't these 11 senators admit that they were wrong, apologize to the Filipino people and hope for the best?—**ERNESTO B. JIMENEZ JR., 16 G. Dee Se Kiat St., Pacific Malayan Village, Cupang, Muntinlupa City**

## Reply from 'lady in black'

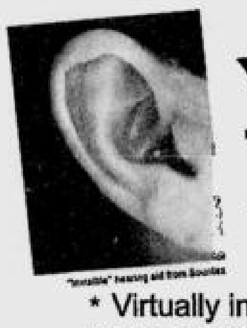
JUST like the majority of my fellow Filipinos, I treasure truth, justice, democracy and the basic human rights, one of which is the freedom of expression. There are always two sides to a story, but must Rina Jimenez-David impugn me and distort facts to convince the public that I had no business being on stage, standing side by side our newly installed President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo? (PDI, 1/12/01)

I am the "mysterious" lady in black she venomously described as "having dyed blond hair, anchoring herself next to Macapagal, frantically having her photo ops with the President." Either David does not know the meaning of "yanked" or she is she prone to exaggerating facts, since no one among Macapagal's security aides jerked or applied strong force to make me step back. Neither did I "frantically" have my photo ops with the President. I simply took snapshots of Macapagal and her spouse. I suppose anyone on stage with a camera would have done the same thing.

The swearing in was viewed nationwide. I believe the viewers would agree that David distorted facts concerning the "woman in black."—**EVELINE Z. POZON, Penthouse C, Makati Tuscany, 6751 Ayala Avenue, Makati City**

## L.A. thanks PDI

THANK you very much for your accurate and up-to-date coverage through "flash news" of events that led to People Power II. Since we are far from our homeland, we rely heavily on news reports from the Inquirer for correct information.—**LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA READERS, vsatorre@aol.com**



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# Malacañang: Erap free to dream of lost presidency

(From page A1)

"He is a king without a kingdom," said Senate Minority Leader Teofisto Guingona Jr.

"He can think he is president; unfortunately, as a legal proposition, he is not," said Sen. Raul Roco.

"For as long as he keeps his challenge through legal action in the courts, he's welcome to think that way," Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said.

"That is expected of him after having been deposed. I think the people have spoken and he has to accept that he is now part of history," said Sen. Franklin Drilon.

Sen. Renato Cayetano said Estrada's statement was alarming and showed that Estrada was a "dangerous person."

"I thought he would be a statesman after having been ousted from office and remain silent . . . In effect, he is summoning his people to do something nasty and mischievous about the present administration," Cayetano said.

Guingona said Estrada's claim had no legal basis. He said Estrada's statement on Jan. 20 following his departure from Malacañang showed he had resigned as president.

Estrada lost his authority to govern when virtually his entire Cabinet resigned, the military and the police withdrew their support from him and the citizenry mounted People Power II at Edsa, he said.

Estrada's allies in the Senate refused to talk about the implications of Estrada's claim but Sen. Ramon Revilla said it would be better for Estrada to formally resign as President to remove a potential for destabilization.

### Very funny

In Negros Occidental, Bishop Emeritus Antonio Y. Fortich said Estrada's claim that he is still president of the country was "very funny."

"He is no longer president, he is just an actor without a stage," Fortich said.

Fortich pointed out that Estrada left Malacañang because he no longer had the support of the people.

"The voice of the people is the voice of God," he said.

Former President Fidel V. Ramos said there was no chance that Estrada would be able to make a comeback.

Asked about the possibility of Estrada regaining the presidency, Ramos answered, "Zero."

Ramos, who represented Ms Macapagal at the World Economic Forum held in Davos, Switzerland, said many countries had recognized the new President and expressed support for her.

Pro-Macapagal lawmakers yesterday blamed lawyers of Estrada for proposing that he hang on to power in a bid to gain immunity from suits.

That legal advice, Quezon City Rep. Michael Defensor said, was "dangerous" and could lead to bloodshed.

"What we are actually seeing here is not the (former) president expressing his own sentiments, it is actually the sentiments or the ideas—probably the mental gymnastics of his lawyers," Camarines Sur Rep. Rolando Andaya Jr. said.

According to Defensor, he learned of the advice after talking to "a person close" to Estrada who revealed that the deposed president had a talk with his lawyers—former Chief Justice Andres Narvasa and the Fortun brothers—on Jan. 21 at his Polk Street residence.

"They were talking about Estrada hanging on and still claiming to be president for purposes of immunity from criminal and civil suits," Defensor said.

*With reports from Martin P. Marfil and Carla P. Gomez*

# Military fully backs GMA, says Reyes

(From page A1)

The top military officers were reacting to the President's first formal address aired nationwide Tuesday night, wherein she said, among other things, that she would "crush" those attempting to destabilize the government.

At yesterday's national convention of the Partido ng Masang Pilipino, former Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno said whatever reference Ms Macapagal might have made to the camp of deposed President Joseph Estrada was "ill-advised."

"Such statements are not conducive to the (political) climate," Puno told reporters. "President Estrada is not engaged in any kind of destabilization effort. He does not want to grab power from anyone else and he has no intention of returning to the presidency soon."

Estrada himself told convention participants that he was committed to regaining the presidency "under a constitutional and lawful framework, through peaceful and non-violent means and such other avenues and relief open to me."

"We will not commit acts of destabilization or any other acts that are outside of what the Constitution allows us," he added.

Estrada's former executive secretary, Ronaldo Zamora, assured reporters that a coup attempt backed by the ousted leader's supporters was "not part of our plans at all."

### No illusion

Calimlim did not name those behind the "intrigues," but declared: "I have no illusion of leading a coup."

He said he had pledged his loyalty to the Constitution and "our new commander in chief."

Calimlim was closely associated with Estrada. As AFP vice chief of staff, he was also concurrently senior military aide to the deposed president and head of the Task Force Aduana, Presidential Security Group and Intelligence Service of the AFP.

Asked about the rumors linking his vice chief of staff to a coup plot, Reyes said: "No, no, no. I have talked with General Calimlim, and there is no truth to that."

He said that the reports on destabilization plots were "subject to verification," and that the government "is on solid ground and will remain so."

Reyes also warned that the AFP would "throw the book at those reported or confirmed to be involved in destabilization or any other activities inimical to the national interest."

Commenting on the coup talks, Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita said: "It's true, they're just rumors. There's nothing to worry about."

### Parameters

Satur Ocampo, president of the party-list group Bayan Muna, said the President "must categorically issue a statement defining the parameters of her stern warning to perceived foes and critics of the administration."

He said Ms Macapagal's warning could be interpreted by some sectors as a declaration of an all-out war against critics and opposition groups.

According to Ocampo, the President must expect criticisms from opposition groups, mainly cause-oriented organizations, which were closely monitoring her moves.

"Many lessons were learned from the first Edsa, and the people are very vigilant and assertive now," Ocampo said. "They will not let things fall on deaf ears or be taken for granted."

### Ballots, not bullets

Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and Sen. Renato Cayetano expressed concern that Estrada's supporters could be instigated to destabilize the Macapagal administration.

"I'm not worried about political organizations as long as they do it within the bounds of law. What I'm worried about is the possibility that mobilization can be mounted for other purposes like destabilizing the government. This may not necessarily come only from President Estrada. Some of his supporters can very well do that," Pimentel said.

But Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, a vocal Estrada ally during the impeachment trial, thinks differently.

"I don't think that is going to happen," he said. "Considering the problems that we have, let the people decide … in the coming elections. Ballots, not bullets, are the answer to the problems of our nation."

Enrile said he was directing his statement more to the Macapagal administration.

He also said there was no reason to fear that he might instigate a coup.

"We have no more capability. We are already inutile," he said, adding:

"We are a spent force. Finished. We have no plan, intention or desire to (perform) acts of destabilization. If I had that kind of purpose I will not participate in the elections. I will stay in my house planning it, and I have no such plans."

*With reports from Gerald G. Lacuarta and Juliet L. Javellana*

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NO OIL PRICE INCREASE IN FEBRUARY

The Consumer and Oil Price Watch is urging the three oil companies NOT to increase oil prices by approximately 58 centavos per liter in February. The "over recovery" of 90 centavos per liter in January can offset the oil price increase and still leave a balance of 32 centavos for the month of March.

The Oil Price Watch based the 90 centavo second price rollback due in January after already providing P1.20 per liter to cover the cost of implementing the Clean Air Act (affecting diesel only and not gasoline) and a partial recovery of their losses last year.

Under the DOE formula, the price increase of 58 centavos in February is based on the $1.18 increase of Dubai crude in January, averaged at $22.83, from $21.65 in December and the peso depreciation of P1.10 in January, P51.02, compared to P49.92 in December.

We will meet with the oil companies and the soon to be appointed Secretary of Energy to reconcile the computation of the "other cost recoveries" on a per liter basis per product, with transparency and full disclosure.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| TOTAL OIL PRICE ROLLBACK DUE THE MONTH OF JANUARY | | P3.25 |
| Deduct: | | |
| 1. Under recovery for October & November | .65 | |
| 2. Our estimate of the "other cost recoveries" claimed by the oil companies | 1.20 | |
| 3. Oil price reduction on January 9th by three oil companies | .50 | P2.35 |
| AMOUNT STILL DUE FROM THE OIL COMPANIES | | P0.90 |
| Deduct - projected oil price increase in February | | .58 |
| BALANCE STILL DUE FROM THE OIL COMPANIES | | P0.32 centavos |

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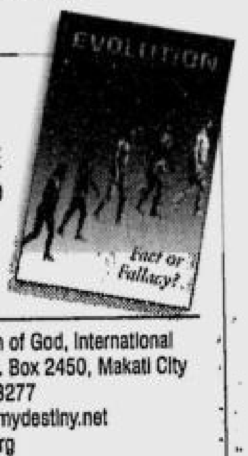

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  *Top in NAC*

**Marge Ongkeko**
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- Phoenix South.Cen
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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

While we all wished that the economic backdrop in 2000 were much better, this did not deter Manulife from completing another excellent year of balanced growth. Besides setting new production records, we succeeded in substantially expanding our agency force by over 50%, thereby closing in on our target of a thousand of the industry's most professional agents by the end of 2002.

It gives me utmost satisfaction that tonight we honor the largest ever number of awardees in our company's history. Over the past five years, we have broken out of our shell. Manulife today is well-positioned to grow into a full financial services organization in the Philippines. As we expand our service offerings this coming year, we will enhance our ability to satisfy our customer's lifetime financial needs. With a growing agency force capable of delivering these services in the professional manner that Manulife is recognized for, the coming years will prove much more exciting for our organization.

I am very proud to have been part of this journey and I look forward to meeting these new challenges.

Congratulations to everyone!

**Renato A. Vergel de Dios**
President & CEO
Manulife Philippines

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# 3 survive 100 hours in rubble

**AHMEDABAD, India—Rescue workers Tuesday miraculously pulled three people from the rubble 100 hours after western India's devastating earthquake, as horror and anger mounted over the scale of the disaster.**

Kunvarben, a 75-year-old grandmother, was finally freed from her ordeal at 2:15 p.m. following a three-hour rescue operation by a Russian team in Bachao township of Gujarat state.

Several hours earlier, emergency workers in Gujarat's commercial capital Ahmedabad pulled a mother and her one-year-old son from the rubble of a four-story apartment block.

The rescues were the only positive news on a day when India was digesting fresh estimates of a final death toll as high as 100,000 from the quake, measuring 7.9 on the Richter scale, that hit Gujarat on Friday.

The sudden leap from 20,000 was made late Monday by Defense Minister George Fernandes, who identified shoddy building standards as the fatal element underlying the level of destruction.

"If you look at the loss of human life then one is looking at perhaps 100,000 people at the moment," Fernandes told the BBC in an interview.

"The number of injured would run to about twice that number if not more," the minister added.

Speaking to reporters in New Delhi Fernandes said his estimate was "not speculative."

"I have stated that if my worst fears come true and I hope they do not, then we are looking at a very large number of casualties," Fernandes said.

If the latest estimates prove to be accurate, the Gujarat disaster will go down as one of the most destructive quakes of modern times.

Gujarat Home Minister Haren Pandya stood by his state government's estimate of between 15,000 and 20,000 dead.

Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee was also more circumspect about the death toll.

"That is his estimate," Vajpayee said of the figure cited by Fernandes.

"Until all the bodies which are trapped below the debris are recovered, a precise figure cannot be given."

Federal Home Minister L.K. Advani warned not to overestimate the toll.

"It is sure that the death toll in the earthquake affected state is in five digits but going beyond it and overestimating, it is felt, would lead to panic among the people," Advani told the state-run television.

Vajpayee said the quake was a test of the nation's strength.

"I sometimes feel that nature is throwing challenges on us to check our strength and dedication, but we will never lose heart. The problem is of an entire nation," Vajpayee said in the northern town of Lucknow.

Despite Tuesday's warming survivor stories, rescue workers said their searches were proving increasingly fruitless, and in many places bulldozers were being called in to uncover the rotting corpses.

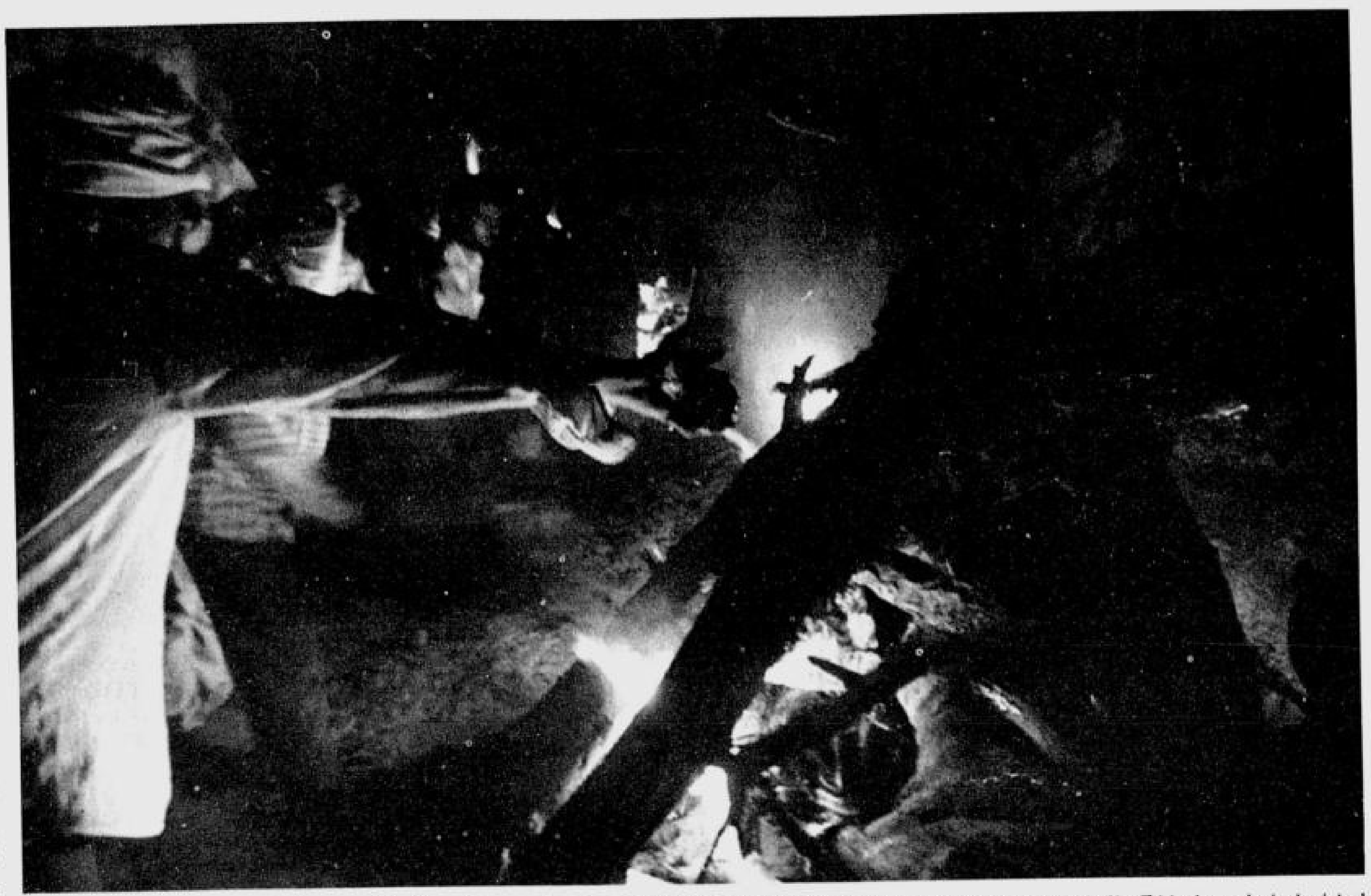
Funeral pyres have been burning all over Gujarat for the past three days and extra firewood was being shipped in from other states.

Minister Pandya and police officials confirmed increasing reports of looting, both of jewelery and other personal effects from bodies, as well as from shops.

"This is emerging as a concern for all the survivors," Pandya said. "We are tightening security all over the place, as well as increasing patrols on the highways."

Gujarat police chief C.P. Singh noted disturbing reports of groups of hungry and desperate villagers waylaying relief trucks in remote areas.

Among the foreign relief supplies were tents and blankets carried by a Pakistan Air Force C-130 aircraft, which arrived in Ahmedabad following days stuck on the tarmac in Islamabad. *AFP*



**RESIDENTS** of the western India town of Bhuj burn the remains of a quake victim Tuesday. The awesome human toll extracted by Friday's quake is depicted at Bhuj's crematoriums, which have been overwhelmed by the unending stream of bodies. Hindus, the majority in India, believe that not cremating a body will leave a person's soul in limbo. AP

# N. Korea facing food shortages

SEOUL—North Korea will face another year of severe food shortages in 2001, lacking one-third of its total grain needs, a South Korean think-tank said Wednesday.

The impoverished communist North needs at least 4.7 million tons of grain a year to feed its 22 million people, but its domestic grain production fell short by 1.9 million tons, said Seoul's state-funded Korea Rural Economic Institute.

The shortfall was largely due to a series of tropical storms that ruined large stretches of North Korean farmland in September, said the institute, which closely monitors the North's food problem.

The North's farm industry has been ruined by communist mismanagement and years of flood and other natural disasters. Since 1995, it has depended on outside aid to feed its people.

By its own account, the North said that more than 220,000 people have died of starvation and hunger-related diseases since the mid-1950s. US officials estimated the North's hunger-related death toll at 2 million.

The UN World Food Program is appealing for 800,000 tons of food to help feed North Korean people through the winter and into the growing season.

Also Wednesday, the South Korean National Council of Churches said it would hold a fund-raising campaign from Feb. 1 to April 20 to send 300 television sets with built-in VCRs to North Korea. *AP*

# Colombia airliner hijacked

BOGOTA—A Colombian commercial airliner with 26 passengers and four crew members aboard was hijacked Tuesday, by a man who boarded the plane in the demilitarized zone controlled by Marxist rebels.

Four hostages have already been released due to health conditions.

It was not immediately known whether the hijacking was related to the fate of the demilitarized zone or the now-stalled talks between government negotiators and the rebels.

The German-made Dornier turboprop airliner from the state-owned airline Satena had stopped to collect passengers in San Vicente del Caguan, en route from Neiva in southeastern Colombia, when it was hijacked, said Gen. 'An xalo Morales, operations director of the Colombian air force.

San Vicente del Caguan is the largest city within the Switzerland-sized zone controlled by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the oldest and largest rebel group in Colombia's 37-year civil war. *AFP*

# 40 nations vow to fight racism

STOCKHOLM—More than 40 countries vowed Tuesday to tighten legislation and improve education on an international basis to fight racism, antisemitism and discrimination as a two-day conference on social intolerance wound up here.

"All crimes against humanity, genocide such as the Holocaust, and atrocities such as slavery and apartheid serve as grim reminders of where intolerance can lead if permitted to flourish," a 10-point declaration issued at the close of the meeting read.

The meeting's 450 delegates agreed to either improve or establish anti-discrimination laws "to deny intolerance a place in our societies," and develop international networks for exchanging experiences on how to educate and train people in tolerance.

The document called for an end to racial discrimination, antisemitism, "islamophobia," xenophobia, discrimination, violence and murder because of sexual orientation—phenomena on the rise in Europe and elsewhere in the world.

The final document, which went through 12 drafts according to Swedish Deputy Prime Minister Lena Hjelm-Wallen, also stressed the need "to instill in our youth respect and appreciation for diversity."

The conference also addressed the challenge posed by the Internet—used by many neo-Nazis and other hate groups to disseminate information—but failed to put any muscle into its commitments, vowing only to encourage Internet providers to adhere to a voluntary code of conduct.

The statement said however that delegates had "noted" that certain countries were considering legal instruments restricting the use of the Internet to spread messages of intolerance, but went no further. *AFP*

## LOCKERBIE TRIAL

# Libyan convicted, another acquitted

CAMP ZEIST—A Scottish court convicted Libyan intelligence officer Abdel Basset Ali al-Megrahi of murder Wednesday in the 1988 bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, that killed 270 people. It acquitted a second Libyan defendant.

"Guilty," pronounced the presiding judge, Lord Ranald Sutherland, of al-Megrahi. "Not guilty," he said regarding Lamen Khalifa Fhimah.

Both decisions were unanimous by the three judges, he said.

"You are discharged and free to go," Sutherland told Fhimah.

Megrahi's attorney William Taylor told the court that his client "maintains his innocence," an indication he will appeal the conviction.

Dozens of relatives from the United States and Britain were in the public gallery in courtroom, as well as several relatives of the two defendants.

The ruling will mean Fhimah, 44, is immediately free to leave the Netherlands and return to Libya. Al-Megrahi, 48, has 14 days to file an appeal against his conviction, which carries a mandatory life sentence in a Scottish prison.

The verdict of the Scottish tribunal was the climax in the 12-year murder investigation and an $80-million trial.

The ruling was unlikely to give the families of the 270 victims a sense of closure at the end of nearly nine months of hearings at a special court in the Netherlands.

Even before the verdict was announced, relatives of the victims said they will pursue the case.

"There are many unanswered questions about who ordered this vile act and why our relatives were not protected," said Jim Swire, a spokesperson for the British relatives who lost his daughter on Pan Am Flight 103.

Swire said the British relatives will seek a public inquiry on how the British government and intelligence services handled the Lockerbie affair.

Prosecutors said the two men conspired to smuggle a bomb-laden suitcase onto a flight from the Mediterranean island of Malta, tagging it for transfer in Frankfurt, Germany, and then to the doomed jetliner in London.

When a small package of plastic explosives detonated at 31,000 feet on Dec. 21, 1988, the aircraft was ripped apart, sending 259 passengers and crew to their deaths. Another 11 were killed on the ground in Lockerbie, Scotland by falling wreckage. Some 189 Americans were murdered in the crash.

Libyan Ambassador Hamed al-Hedderi entered the high security courtroom an hour before the judges were due to take the bench. *AP*

# Molester to be caned

SINGAPORE—A Singapore man will be caned and jailed after being found guilty of molesting a sleeping woman on board a flight between the United States and Singapore, a newspaper reported on Wednesday.

The daily Straits Times newspaper said 27-year-old computer engineer Swarup Das will appeal the sentence of three lashes and a year in jail.

Das claimed in court that he had fallen asleep on the Singapore Airlines flight from San Francisco to Singapore on Sept. 8 and had unconsciously slipped his hands into the panties of the sleeping woman who was seated next to him, the paper said.

He said he unintentionally hitched up the woman's dress with his legs while asleep.

Das demonstrated in court the position he was sleeping in on the plane. However, District Judge Hoo Sheau Peng said that because Das is tall his claim was unbelievable, the report said. *AP*

# Bitter cold kills 110 Afghan refugees

**AFGHAN** families sit and wait after arriving at the Jalozai refugee camp, 30 km southeast of Pakistan's major frontier city of Peshawar Jan. 30. At least 70,000 ragged men, women and children are jammed under plastic sheeting in this squalid refugee camp, the latest wave to flee the deepening humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan. REUTERS

ISLAMABAD—In just one night 110 people—most of them women and children with only plastic sheets to keep them warm—died this week in refugee camps in western Afghanistan when temperatures plummeted to minus 25 Celsius, the United Nations said Wednesday.

An emergency UN appeal for $3.5 million to house and clothe an estimated 80,000 Afghans driven from their homes by a devastating drought and living in desperate conditions in camps in western Afghanistan seems to have been largely ignored.

According to a UN statement issued in neighboring Afghanistan barely $200,000 has been pledged, while Erick de Mul, the UN humanitarian coordinator pleaded for $3.5 million just to buy blankets and tents.

The refugees living in camps in Afghanistan western Herat began arriving in July, driven from their homes in search of food and water, their crops and livestock decimated by the worst drought in 30 years.

"Over 110 displaced persons in camps in Herat, Afghanistan died due to extreme cold on the night of Jan. 29," de Mul said in a statement issued in neighboring Pakistan." It is believed the main victims of the extreme temperatures were children and the elderly."

The conditions there are desperate, says the United Nations.

According to the United Nations 5,000 families are sharing 1,700 tents, with each tent meant to house just one family. Most families in Afghanistan have at least four children, many much more.

And according to the UN statement the situation is only getting worse with the weather improving only slightly. Temperatures on Tuesday rose to minus 16 Celsius.

For several months the United Nations workers in both Afghanistan and Pakistan have been warning of a refugee crisis, with millions of people in the war-ruined Central Asian nation affected by drought as well as a protracted civil war. *AP*

# *Breast feeding reduces cancer risk, says study*

NEW HAVEN, Connecticut—Women who breast fed their babies for two years or longer reduced their risk of breast cancer by 50 percent, a study of women in rural China found.

The study by Yale University researchers bolsters other studies in China and in the United States, and finds that the benefits are similar whether the cancer strikes before or after menopause.

Researchers said they hope the study will change cultural attitudes and encourage more American women to breast-feed for longer periods of time.

On average, less than one-third of American women continue breast feeding until their babies are six months old, government statistics show.

A tiny percentage of American women continue to nurse until the child is two years old, but in China and many other developing countries, breast feeding for two years or more is the norm.

Researcher Tongzhang Zheng said that women cannot control many risk factors for breast cancer, such as family history and environmental factors.

"It's one factor people may be able to change," said Zheng, an associate professor of epidemiology and public health at the Yale School of Medicine.

The study, published in the American Journal of Epidemiology, looked at the medical history of 808 Chinese women in rural Shandong province from 1997 to 1999. Half of the women—who ranged in age from 30 to 80—had had breast cancer, half had not.

The number of babies a woman breast-fed and her age at her first breast feeding did not appear to be factors in breast cancer risk, Zheng said.

The study did not explore reasons why breast feeding lowers the risk of breast cancer. One theory is that breast feeding reduces exposure to estrogen and the regular female hormone cycles, Zheng said. Another theory is that fat-soluble carcinogens and pollutants are not stored as much in lactating breasts.

The study is compatible with other studies done over the years in other countries, said Dr. Ruth A. Lawrence, who teaches pediatrics at the University of Rochester.

"It's extremely valuable to do these studies and confirm studies that have been done earlier and in different populations," Lawrence said.

She said the study was particularly interesting because it showed a reduced risk for post-menopausal women, since other studies had focused on benefits for younger women.

Research has long shown that breast feeding also is good for babies, providing better nutrition, strengthened immune systems and fewer illnesses than a formula diet.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends breast feeding for the first year of life. Unicef and the World Health Organization recommend breast feeding at least until age 2, supplemented with other foods.

Still, a stigma persists in the United States that discourages breast feeding.

Women who try to breast-feed are subjected to leers, rude remarks and criticism, said Katherine A. Dettwyler, an associate professor of anthropology and nutrition at Texas A&M University who has studied long-term breast feeding. *AP*

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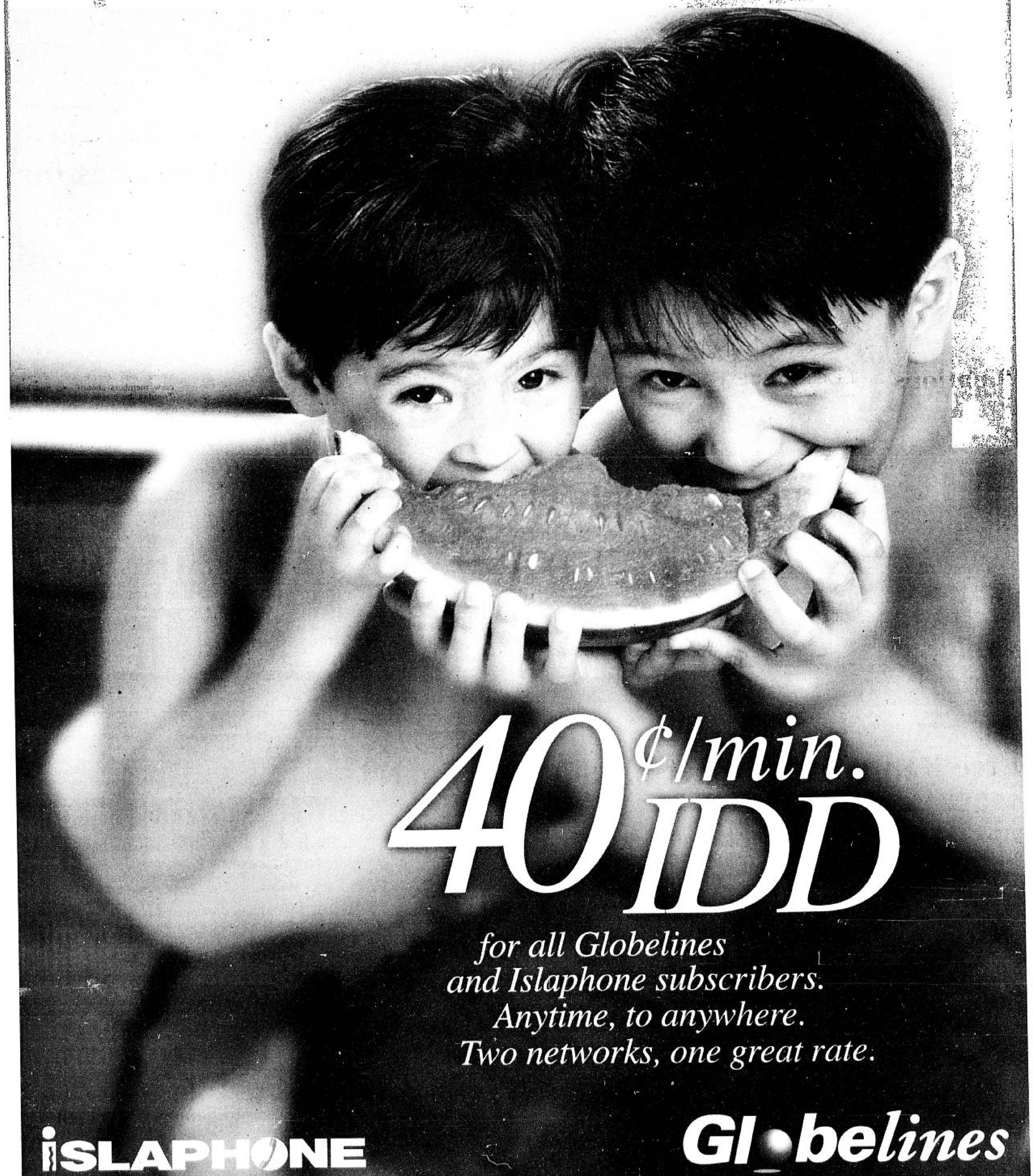

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## Unions take GMA to task over GATT, free trade

BAGUIO CITY—More than 1,000 laborers nationwide who attended a Labor Consultative Assembly here blamed President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo for the massive downsizing, retrenchment and contractualization of workers in the last three years when the effects of globalization were felt in the country.

Gerardo Rivera, acting president of the Philippine Airlines Employees Association, said labor unions are indignant over the Senate confirmation of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade that paved the way for globalization.

Ms Macapagal was among the main authors of the Senate endorsement of GATT when she was a senator in 1995.

"The capitalists had primarily taken advantage of Ms Macapagal's globalization (policy) and because of that, we have never experienced (an upliftment in the condition) of the labor sector in our country. Instead, what we got in return were downsizing of laborers, union busting and contractualization," Rivera, who attended the Labor Consultative Assembly at the Teachers' Camp here, told the INQUIRER.

He said the safety nets for globalization, which Ms Macapagal was proposing to the business and economic sector, came "too late."

"Why only now? Ms Macapagal should have presented those safety nets when she co-authored GATT," he said.

At least 800 labor unions in the country met here to draw up the labor agenda that they will present to Ms Macapagal.

Union officials said they would like the President to address unemployment in the country.

Victor Briz, national president of the Bukluran ng Manggagawang Pilipino, said Department of Labor and Employment records do not reflect the real unemployment picture in the country.

Figures from the research group IBON showed that 119 workers were being laid off everyday since last year.

Bureau of Labor and Employment Statistics records showed that 1,884 establishments resorted to permanent closures and retrenchment that sent 56,598 workers jobless from January to October 2000.

Should globalization prove difficult to avoid, Ms Macapagal's safety nets "should aim to protect workers," Briz said.

He said the Constitution guarantees the rights of workers to job security and to a decent wage.

Quezon City Rep. Michael Defensor, who addressed assembly participants on behalf of the President, asked the workers to support the Macapagal administration.

"But before we support her, she should support us first. She was not our choice as President, although we were also vocal about Joseph Estrada's resignation. It's about time for her to realize what she had done to the workers," Rivera said. *Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

# Sonny O worried Serge-Lito feud could wipe out Osmeñas

**BY MALOU GUANZON-APALISOK**
*PDI Visayas Bureau*

CEBU CITY—Sen. John "Sonny" Osmeña expressed fears that the continuing feud in his clan could turn voters off and drive the Osmeñas out of influence in politics.

Sonny made the statement here shortly after his younger brother, Emilio "Lito" Osmeña, declared that he was running for senator even at the risk of negatively affecting the reelection bid of his cousin, incumbent Sen. Sergio "Serge" Osmeña III.

Sonny said he felt depressed over the conflict between Lito and Serge as it might signal the end of the Osmeña family's hold on politics in Cebu.

"The people will be revolted with the (feud of) the Osmeñas. There will be a backlash (and it could affect the Osmeña family), including John-John (Sonny's son), Tommy (Serge's brother) and Renato (cousin of Sonny and Serge)," said Sonny.

"Everybody will be affected by the backlash," Sonny said.

Aside from Lito and Serge, four other members of the Osmeña clan are running for elective positions in Cebu.

Tomas will try to regain his seat as Cebu City mayor. Vice Mayor Renato Osmeña and brother, Rogelio, a city councilor, will run for reelection. Board member John-John Osmeña, Sonny's only child, will run for vice governor.

"(Serge and Lito) will attack each other and the people will be revolted. The people will reject them both, including their relatives," Sonny said in Cebuano.

"I am depressed at this moment because I think this is the end of the Osmeña family because the backlash will be great," he said.

Sonny said he foresees the defeat of Serge and Lito in the elections with two Osmeñas running for senator.

He recalled that in the 1992 senatorial elections he almost did not make it when a relative, Steve Osmeña, also ran for senator. Sonny ended up 23rd in the race.

Based on his experience, Sonny said, even teachers in urban centers are not familiar with the election law that provides that when two candidates with the same surname run for the same post, the ballot that carries only the common surname is counted in favor of the incumbent.

Sonny said his estranged brother, Lito, must harbor a deep grudge against Serge and this could have driven him to decide to run side by side with cousin Serge in the senatorial race.

"That's why I said the grudge must be very deep because it's Lito himself who is frontally attacking Serge. This is not Lito's style. He makes other people do the attacking for him," said Sonny.

In a press conference on Monday, Lito had asked Serge to make way for his senatorial bid. He said Serge did not perform well in the Senate except for voting in favor of the opening of a second sealed envelope during the impeachment trial of President Joseph Estrada.

But Sonny defended Serge, saying he is "a very outstanding and hardworking senator." He added that Serge would stay up late to take part in public hearings.

"It is not true that Serge did not do anything in the Senate. (On) that I will totally and absolute disagree with Lito. Serge is one of the most if not the most well-studied senator particularly on agriculture," Sonny said.

Serge chairs the Senate committee on agriculture and the sub-committee of finance. He also heads a committee that is studying ways to modernize the country's agriculture, Sonny said.

Observers in Cebu said Lito may have become angry at Serge's appeal for President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to withdraw the appointments to key government positions of men known to be protegés of Lito.

Among them was Winston Garcia, who was appointed general manager and president of the Government Service Insurance System.

Serge said although Garcia was a lawyer, he had no background in pension funds.

Serge said the more qualified person for the job would be Clarissa Ocampo, vice president of PCI-Equitable Bank who testified during the impeachment trial that she saw ousted President Estrada sign the name "Jose Velarde" in a bank transaction involving P500 million.

BEN MOSES EBREO

**PRO-GUN**

Gun enthusiasts in Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya test their skills at firing their weapons, which, in these times of criminality and uncertainty, are being sought for protection.

## Lakas, Drilon clash over candidates for Iloilo local posts

**BY MA. DIOSA LABISTE**
*PDI Visayas Bureau*

ILOILO CITY—Lakas-NUCD leaders in the city and province are in a collision course with their *kasimanwa* (provincemate) Sen. Franklin Drilon over his choices of candidates for local elective positions.

Iloilo City Rep. Raul Gonzalez decried Drilon's "meddling" in city politics when the senator endorsed City Vice Mayor Guillermo de la Llana for mayor.

Gonzalez, member of the Nacionalista Party and Lakas-NUCD city chair, and Mayor Mansueto Malabor are backing former City Mayor Jerry Treñas for the mayoralty race.

"I have told Drilon that we don't want to be pushed into the extreme option of campaigning against him," said Gonzalez.

Provincial Lakas-NUCD leaders were also dismayed at Drilon for pushing for former Iloilo Rep. Niel Tupas for governor instead of their likely candidate, Vice Gov. Demy Sonza.

Gov. Arthur Defensor, Lakas-NUCD chair in Iloilo's third district, said he parted ways with Drilon after the senator chose Tupas.

"Drilon is a bosom friend but Tupas is not a bosom friend," he said.

Drilon, from Molo District this city, is with the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino, a member party of the erstwhile ruling coalition Lapian ng Masang Pilipino.

But his endorsement was viewed as crucial because of his close links with former President Corazon Aquino, President Macapagal-Arroyo and leaders of the group that ousted President Joseph Estrada.

Gonzalez said Treñas should have been the senator's "right choice" for mayor because Treñas and the local Lakas-NUCD stood by Drilon "when his chips were down after he resigned from the LAMP and (was) ousted as Senate President."

The Lakas-led city council in November passed a resolution expressing support for Drilon when it asked Estrada to step down over allegations that he took millions of pesos in jueteng bribe and tobacco tax kickbacks.

Treñas, a lawyer and businessman, was a familiar face in anti-Estrada protests in Iloilo.

"Senator Drilon's choice is wrong," said Councilor German Gonzales.

In an interview over Aksyon Radyo, Gonzales and fellow councilor, Rita Sarabia criticized Drilon's "interference" and vowed to "go house to house to convince city voters to reject Senator Drilon."

Yesterday, Gonzales and Councilor Ma. Rita Bascos-Zarabia delivered a privilege speech asking Drilon not to meddle in Iloilo City politics.

Drilon explained that De la Llana was the right choice for mayor because of his integrity.

The local Lakas-NUCD disputed him and pointed to De la Llana's indifference while the local Lakas-NUCD was on the streets pushing for Estrada's ouster.

The Lakas leaders here also criticized Drilon's hand in the reappointment of Rene Villa as Presidential Assistant for Western Visayas.

Villa resigned in October shortly after Drilon resigned as Senate President amid the scandal rocking the Estrada administration.

Ms Macapagal reappointed him to his old post shortly after she assumed the presidency.

## Sanlakas forming labor party

BAGUIO CITY—Officials and members of labor unions in the country are forming a political party and are fielding candidates in the May 14 elections to push for the labor sector's issues.

The decision to form a labor party was made by leaders of 700 labor unions nationwide during the closing ceremonies of the Labor Consultative Assembly at the Teachers' Camp here on Wednesday.

The emerging party, according to union leaders, is the result of their dissatisfaction with President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's Cabinet appointments.

"There's a strong clamor to form a labor party. The labor groups have not been united in the anti-Erap campaign. The substance of reform was not even tackled during the Edsa rally," said Sanlakas Rep. Renato Magtubo, a convenor of the assembly.

Victor Briz, president of the Bukluran ng Manggagawang Pilipino, said they would also work to organize the pro-labor votes.

Magtubo said the labor sector would maintain a political force to introduce just reforms for workers who, he noted, have been put in a disadvantageous position by the government's policy on globalization.

Globalization has paved way to the labor sector's problem on privatization, deregulation and trade liberalization, according to the union leaders.

The labor representatives have not accepted Ms Macapagal's assumption to the presidency, Magtubo said, adding they are "outrightly rejecting" the President.

"Outright rejection (because) she ratified anti-labor policies when she was a senator. Even when she was elected as vice president, she was useless and was unable to help us. Her being an economist is such a waste," he said.

Magtubo said labor leaders would not endorse anyone to the post of labor secretary.

The labor unions also warned that workers nationwide would lead an Edsa People Power III should Ms Macapagal continue with her anti-labor policies.

"The conservative institutions forced us to accept GMA as our president, although we have not favored her succession from the very start. From our point of view, we recognize her as a resident of Malacañang and not a president of Malacañang. But let us try her," Briz said. *Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

## Free Balweg slay suspect, Aglipayans appeal

BAGUIO CITY—The Aglipayan Church has asked President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to free all political prisoners, particularly one of their church workers who was imprisoned in Abra for the murder of former rebel priest Conrado Balweg in December 1999.

Rev. Tomas Millamena, Opispo Maximo of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente, called on Ms Macapagal to release 200 political prisoners because they are "part of the toiling masses who helped bring her to office."

"The 200 plus political prisoners did fight the evil forces during the Marcos dictatorship, during the low intensity conflict of Corazon Aquino and Fidel Ramos and during the all-out war of the recently deposed President Joseph Estrada," Millamena said.

"They are the fathers, mothers, sons and daughters of the countless Filipinos who marched on the streets to oust Estrada."

The Aglipayan Church asked Ms Macapagal to release Lorna Rivera-Baba, a lay worker of the Aglipayan Church in the Diocese of La Union, Ilocos Sur and Abra, who has been detained since last year for the murder of Balweg.

Military intelligence agents, who went to Abra to conduct raids on jueteng operations there last March 17, decided instead to arrest Baba for the murder.

"She was forcibly abducted by the agents in front of our parish church in Pidigan, Abra. She was held *incommunicado* for three days. She was illegally detained, insulted and mentally tortured by her abductors," Millena said.

"We ask President Macapagal to kindly release her," he added. "Your Excellency, our demands should not be disregarded. You have now the power to command. You are the commander-in-chief of the Republic. Your kind action . . . (would not only be a sign of) goodwill but also a sincere act of following the will of God." *Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

### PEACE PACT FUNCTION

## Ex-NPAs arrest Silay's most wanted

**BY CARLA GOMEZ**
*PDI Visayas Bureau*

BACOLOD CITY—The Revolutionary Proletarian Army-Alex Boncayao Brigade (RPA-ABB) turned over to authorities on Tuesday the most wanted man in Silay City whom the breakaway group arrested in a remote area in northern Negros.

Carapali Lualhati, RPA-ABB national commander, surrendered Lagney Llanera to Supt. Ricardo de la Paz, police chief of Silay, 14.4 kilometers south of Bacolod.

Llanera, an alleged leader of a robbery-hold-up syndicate, was classified by the police as public enemy No. 1 in Silay. He was tagged as leader of the busted "Otso Oros" gang.

Lualhati said the RPA-ABB arrested Llanera in Hacienda Pula, Barangay E. Lopez, in Silay on Jan. 2. The suspect was restricted to areas controlled by RPA-ABB "for rehabilitation and indoctrination."

De la Paz thanked Lualhati for the RPA-ABB's continued support in the government's anti-crime drive.

Lualhati said his group's effort in helping the police in peacekeeping functions is part of the group's initial peace agreement with the government.

He said the RPA-ABB agreed to help maintain law and order and arrest wanted persons in areas where its guerrillas are located.

The details of this function were to be included in the provisions that would be drafted by a Joint Enforcement and Monitoring Committee that was to be created following the signing of the peace agreement on Dec. 10, he said.

But it did not push through because President Joseph Estrada was ousted on Jan. 20 by People Power II.

Judge Felipe Banzon of the Regional Trial Court Branch 69 in Silay had issued an arrest warrant against Llanera for the killing of Virgilio Mordinio on Dec. 11 in Hacienda Cubay, Barangay Capitan Ramon, Silay.

Police investigators said Llanera's companions, Rolando Beira and Eduardo Tetolio, had turned state witnesses and identified him as the one who shot Mordinio.

Before the killing, Llanera and four other alleged members of the Otso Oros gang were arrested on July 21 last year by the Silay police for a series of robbery-hold-up incidents in Silay City and E.B. Magalona town.

The police filed robbery charges but these were dismissed by the Silay City prosecutor's office after the complainants backed out.

As a result, Llanera and his companions were released from jail.

De la Paz said Llanera harassed the complainants into withdrawing the charges by warning them that something bad would happen to them.

Llanera, in front of De la Paz and Lualhati, said he was ready to face the murder charges filed against him in court.

## ROUNDUP

### Pangasinan malnutrition cases down

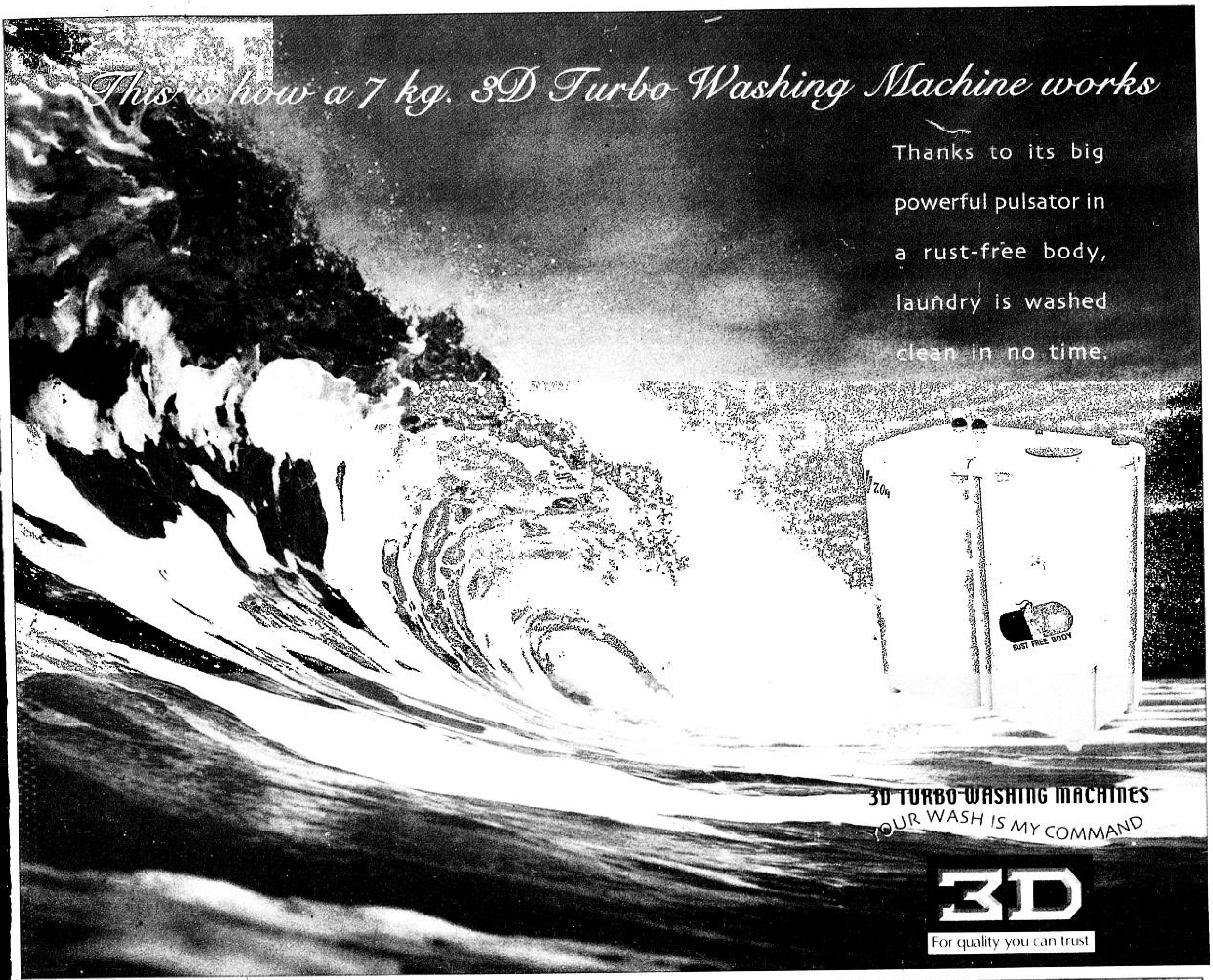
LINGAYEN, Pangasinan—The number of malnutrition cases in Pangasinan went down by 2.19 percent, provincial nutrition officer Estela Braga said. She said the downtrend was noted during "Operation Timbang" in 46 towns. A total of 382,025 children aged a month to seven years old were checked by doctors during Operation Timbang. She said Gov. Victor Agbayani approved an additional P2 million for the nutrition program and provided a vehicle and weighing scales. *Yolanda Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

### 17-year-old NPA rebel killed

DUMAGUETE CITY—A 17-year-old suspected communist guerrilla was killed Saturday night during a shoot-out between Army troopers and New People's Army rebels in Sitio Cagubcob, Barangay Tanglad in the mountains of Tayasan town. Lt. Col. Rafael Altamera, commander of the Army's 66th Infantry Battalion based in Guihulngan town, said the slain guerrilla was a resident of Barangay Tamao, Jimalalud town. His body was recovered and brought to Tayasan town. Altamera said his men, led by Sgt. Reynaldo Mallari, also recovered an M-16 rifle, four magazines with ammunition and uniforms. The soldiers stepped up their offensives in Tayasan following reports that the rebels, believed to be members of the Larangang Gerilya 2 Komiteng Rehiyon-Negros, were frequenting the area. *Alex Pal, PDI Visayas Bureau*

### Fake gold bar gang members fall

TUGUEGARAO CITY—Police arrested four suspected members of two fake gold bar syndicates, including a former Army officer, in separate buy-bust operations. Seized from Juanito and Dionisio Urmanita and Romeo Arellano in Calamaniugan town were P150,000 in cash and checks and two sacks of rice they got from their victim, Wilson Bayanos. In Sta. Teresita town, police arrested Romy Iris, a discharged Army corporal, and his companion for selling a fake gold bar. *Estanislao Caldez, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*



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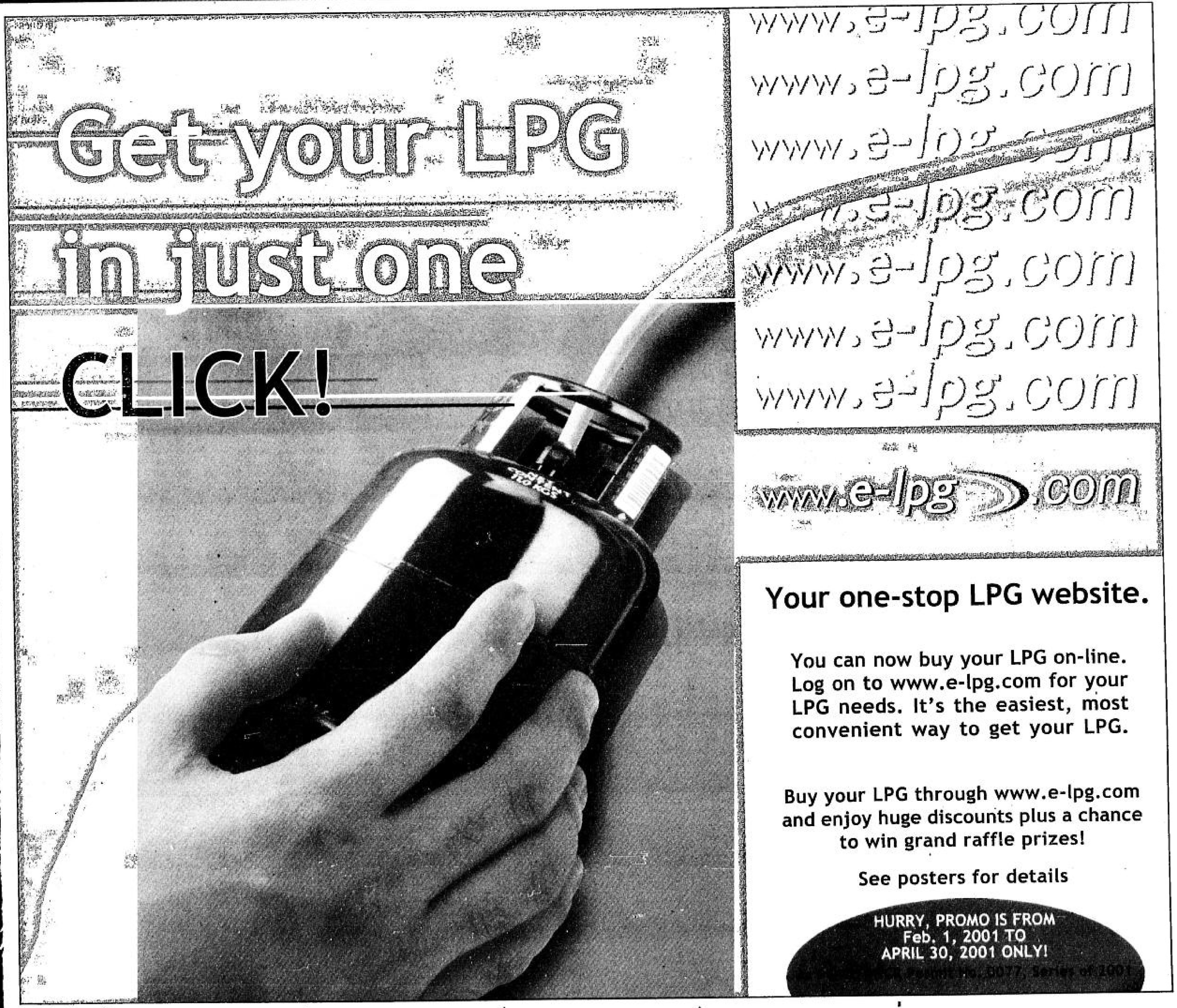

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# Defiant Estrada: I am still President

(From page A1)

Estrada said he appointed Ms Macapagal merely as acting President when he issued "a notice of temporary inability to perform the functions of my office" under Section 11, Article VII of the Constitution.

As the government collapsed after top military and Cabinet officials abandoned Estrada at the height of Edsa People Power II, the Supreme Court declared the presidency vacant and authorized Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. to swear in then Vice President Macapagal on Jan. 20.

Estrada's backers, like lawyer Oliver Lozano, have asked the Supreme Court to clarify the legality of Ms Macapagal's takeover. The high court is expected to issue a ruling shortly.

### Too many abuses

"Too many constitutional abuses on the assumption of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to the presidency remain unresolved. This is probably the biggest challenge to our Constitution in our nation's history," Estrada said.

Under the Constitution, he said, the Vice President may succeed the President only in four instances: by resignation, by permanent disability, by removal from office through conviction by impeachment or by death.

"I have not resigned; I have not been convicted in the impeachment trial; and as you can see, I have no permanent disability. I am still very strong. It is also very obvious that I am still very much alive," he added.

Estrada said he left Malacañang "to prevent unnecessary bloodshed much as I refused to disperse the crowd at Edsa to avoid unnecessary violence."

The former action film star asserted he was elected in 1998 to a six-year term by more than 10 million people, outnumbering the hundreds of thousands who took part in the street protests that led to his downfall.

"The voice of those at Edsa is not the voice of the entire Filipino nation. It is also not the voice of the entire electorate which elected me to my office with a mandate of over 10 million votes. Neither does that unconstitutional episode represent the mandate of our Constitution," Estrada said.

Vowing to "pursue justice," he said he would take only peaceful and legal steps and "such other avenues and relief open to me" to safeguard his rights.

Estrada said he and his followers "will not commit acts of destabilization" or other extra-legal means.

He was apparently reacting to Ms Macapagal's televised statement on Tuesday evening that groups using ill-gotten wealth were trying to destabilize her administration. She vowed to crush them.

### Banana republic

"I am not disposed to leaving a legacy of a banana republic where presidents are changed on the basis of a coup d'etat or a withdrawal of support by the military," he said.

Estrada said the political crisis would not have deteriorated had those calling for his resignation allowed his impeachment trial to continue.

He was impeached in November and stood trial in the Senate for allegedly taking bribes from illegal "jueteng" lords, pocketing tobacco tax kickbacks, interfering in the work of securities regulators, and acquiring ill-gotten wealth.

But the 24-day impeachment trial was suspended indefinitely after House prosecutors walked out following an adverse ruling that barred them access to bank records on Estrada's alleged P2.3-billion account with Equitable PCI Bank.

In his speech, Estrada claimed efforts to pursue charges against him had shaken the banking system, violated property laws and impaired the Bill of Rights.

The Macapagal administration has also launched a criminal inquiry into Estrada's alleged unexplained wealth, frozen a number of his bank accounts, and barred him from leaving the country.

Estrada described these actions as well as alleged pressure on his former friends to turn against him as part of a plan "to legalize and deodorize" an unlawful succession.

"We are faced today with the grave and overpowering constitutional crisis," Estrada said.

It "cannot be simply resolved by putting me in exile or subjecting me to harassment, threats and other forms of intimidation."

He vowed never to leave the country.

"I was born here, and I intend to die here. I assure you I will never abandon the Filipino people. For life!" he declared to thunderous cheers.

*With reports from AFP and AP*

# Erap out to 'seek vindication' in polls

(From page A1)

Police Chief Panfilo "Ping" Lacson, who according to a close civilian friend, would rather run either under the banner of the Laban ng Demokratiking Pilipino (LDP) or the Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC) "if given a choice."

- Former ambassador to Washington and presidential spokesperson for the impeachment trial Ernesto Maceda.
- ABS-CBN broadcaster Noli de Castro, who announced his own candidacy on the evening news.
- Of course, former Estrada Cabinet members Zamora, Orlando Mercado, Ricardo "Dong" Puno, Alfredo Lim, Horacio Morales, Alfredo Romualdez, Bienvenido Laguesma, Jamby Madrigal.
- Puerto Princesa City Mayor Edward Hagedorn, actress and IBC-13 executive Boots Anson Roa, Rizal Rep. Gilberto Duavit, South Cotabato Representatives Daisy Avance-Fuentes and Luwalhati Antonino, Maguindanao Rep. Didagen Dilangalen, Immigration Commissioner Rufus Rodriguez, Rizal Gov. Casimiro Ynares, and Bukidnon Gov. Carlos Fortich.

### Battle cry

Appearing in public for the first time since he left Malacañang on Jan. 20, Estrada called on the supporters and leaders of the PMP to "wage a battle" challenging the legitimacy of the Macapagal administration.

Estrada asked his party—and its allies, the NPC and the LDP, "to consolidate, reorganize and rebuild . . . to match this constitutional challenge."

"We must wage a battle through Constitutional processes and remind the powers that be of what they have forgotten," Mr. Estrada said in his speech.

### Loi not convinced

A source told the INQUIRER yesterday that the former first lady was actually still "waiting to be fully convinced about running since Erap himself is reluctant to make her run."

Another source in the Estrada camp said the ex-President already had the slogan "Doktora ng Masa" in mind last week when he floated of letting Dr. Ejercito, a psychiatrist, run for senator.

Allies warned that the slogan might confuse voters, especially since Lakas-NUCD also planned to field a doctor, Senator and former Health Secretary Juan Flavier, in the senatorial race.

Estrada was not to be discouraged, however, the source said. The former President pointed out that Ejercito's medical missions when she was still first lady were similar to the rigors of an election campaign.

### Humble

"She has already gone around the country. Isn't that what they do in a campaign?" Estrada reportedly told his friends.

Former Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno said Ejercito was being considered "because she will be a good representative of the Filipino masses."

"She is humble, has genuine concern for the poor, is low-key and only does things consistent with her beliefs," Puno told reporters before the start of the PMP convention yesterday morning.

Puno said the party did not dwell on whether public opinion against her husband would affect Ejercito's candidacy.

"It is not within our control that the election has been scheduled so close to Edsa Dos. The election date is based on what the law says. We do not have control over the time frame," Puno said.

### To face judgment

Enrile announced at the PMP convention that he had already filed his candidacy for a Senate seat the other day.

He said he had initially considered just running for congressman in his district in Cagayan province "where I have no opponents" but chose the Senate race "to face the judgment of the people."

Zamora declared in his opening remarks: "It is our intention to seek vindication in the next local and national elections."

"*Ginoong Pangulo*, our program was slightly delayed because we were only expecting about 300 to 500 people today, but look at the thousands who are here," he said.

Zamora claimed that "more than 700 mayors signified their intention to stay with the PMP. Our party is still very strong."

Sen. Blas Ople, during his turn at the podium, recalled in Filipino how "the mandate given by millions of Filipino to President Estrada was disregarded by a minority who made much noise in the streets."

In the May 14 polls, Ople said, "we will still prove that President Estrada is the recognized leader of the nation."

### Opposition

Reacting to Dr. Ejercito's proposed candidacy, former opposition forces behind the street protests that drove Estrada from power said they would push for legislation barring families of deposed leaders from running for elective posts.

In separate press conferences, convenors of Kompil II and the Anti-Trapo Movement lambasted the former first lady.

"She is a disgrace to Filipino womanhood. We know for a fact that she is running just to cover-up her husband's trail," said running priest Roberto Reyes, a convenor of Kompil II.

"We will push for legislation to bar families of deposed leaders to run for any elective post. We should not allow them to return to power, like what happened to the Marcoses," he said, referring to the heirs of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

But a more practical JB Bautista, a lawyer and convenor of ATM, observed that it was unconstitutional to bar families of deposed leaders from running for elective posts.

"Nobody can stop them from running. But people can show their anger against these families by not electing them in any position," he said.

# Erap finds . . .

(From page A1)

Masang Pilipino.

The 63-year-old former president and movie star was welcomed by a crowd notable not for who was there but for who wasn't.

The influential politicians and businessmen who used to line up near the door to greet him were nowhere to be seen. Most of the 24 nominated senatorial candidates of his party did not show up, including his wife.

Reminiscent of the Marcos loyalist movement, the Estrada camp tried to put on a show of force, with some 3,000 supporters—from the *barong*-clad to the dirt-poor—packing Club Filipino in Greenhills, San Juan, to cheer their beloved leader.

Not a stranger himself to political comebacks, Ilocos Norte Gov. Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. arrived with Estrada's son, San Juan Mayor Jinggoy Estrada.

"Erap forever!" the worked-up crowd cried, shaking fists as Estrada waved, smiled and breathed fire from the lectern, wearing the trademark white terrycloth wristband bearing the presidential insignia.

Ironically, the ousted president spoke at the same upscale club that became a historical bastion of the People Power revolt that overthrew the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

Former President Corazon Aquino was sworn in there after Marcos was ousted in 1986. A mural of the historical moment is displayed at the club's entrance.

The club was also the site of the first public accusations of corruption against Estrada. Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson chose the club last October to make public his allegations that he helped Estrada grow rich off bribes and kickbacks.

### Refreshed

Estrada was hailed "our beloved President" by several thousand supporters as he motored to the convention just two blocks away from his San Juan mansion.

Though former first lady Loi Ejercito was not present at the convention, some members of the Estrada Cabinet who stuck with him until the final hours of his presidency were there.

The former leader himself looked refreshed, his pompadour hair impeccably coifed. He sounded indignant as he worked up the crowd in a stirring 30-minute speech reminiscent of his days as president.

For his faithful followers, Estrada's performance evoked memories of his underdog screen roles he honed to perfection during his career in the movies.

Supporters wore orange "Erap" wristbands and wriggled to the popular "Macarena" dance tune, turned into a campaign jingle with the refrain "Makamasa (pro-poor)."

"*Walang iwanan*! (We stick together)" became the new slogan of the gathering, repeatedly chanted throughout the two-hour program hosted by actress and broadcast executive Boots Anson Roa, often addressed as "Senadora" by other speakers.

After Estrada delivered his speech, Roa described the piece as his "*Sumbong sa Bayan*."

### Shrieks

JV Ejercito, Estrada's son by Guia Gomez, repeatedly complained of "harassment" from the Macapagal administration when interviewed by the press at the gathering.

Actor Rudy Fernandez, who plans to run for mayor of Quezon City, expectedly drew movie-fan shrieks when he arrived, briefly interrupting Estrada's speech.

Unabashed by the fall of the administration they supported, former officials who were there included former Executive Secretary Ronaldo Zamora; former Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno and his brother, former Press Secretary Ricardo Puno and former Health Secretary Alfredo Romualdez.

Other Estrada supporters present were Senators Juan Ponce Enrile and Blas Ople, Puerto Princesa City Mayor Edward Hagedorn, Rizal Gov. Casimiro Ynares, Representatives Didagen Dilangalen, Rodolfo Albano, JJ Romualdo, and Vicente Andaya.

Roa acknowledged the presence of at least 13 provincial governors and more than 20 mayors. She also made special mention of Bongbong Marcos.

### 'Back to follow him'

As pro-Estrada VIPs beat their chests in preparation for the coming campaign, their placard-bearing supporters worked the streets.

Elena Baron, 60, a housewife from Brgy. Holy Spirit, Quezon City, said "I cried and almost had had a heart attack when I saw him and his family leaving Malacañang."

"We were there to protect him at Mendiola, and now we're back to follow him," said Joel Ramada, 30, a house painter, recalling the throng that blocked anti-Estrada marchers headed for the Palace on Jan. 20, the day Estrada and his family sailed sadly down the Pasig River, and away from their home of more than two years.

"Thus passes away the glory of this world." *With reports from AP, AFP*

# Metro folk accept Gloria, poll shows

(From page A1)

dents polled by SWS on Jan. 27 consider Ms Macapagal an acceptable replacement for ousted President Joseph Estrada.

The SWS survey, conducted a week after Ms Macapagal succeeded Estrada, saw her net trust rating jumping 55 percentage points from negative 34 percent in the SWS survey on Jan. 6-9 to 21 percent.

At the same time, Estrada's net trust ratings plunged from negative one percent to negative 18 percent.

Asked about what they thought gave Ms Macapagal the right to become President, 48 percent said it was People Power. Forty-five (45) percent said it was the Supreme Court declaration that the presidency was vacant.

But 21 percent said Ms Macapagal became President because of the military and police's withdrawal of support from Estrada. Another 21 percent said it was due to the support of the Catholic Church.

The total exceeded 100 percent because the respondents were allowed to make multiple choices.

Only 9 percent of the respondents said Ms Macapagal had no right to be President.

Fifty (50) percent said they expect Ms Macapagal to be a better President than Mr. Estrada while 9 percent expect her to do worse.

The SWS also found that net optimism on the economy soared from negative 19 percent to a positive 29 percent.

### Businessmen bullish

Members of the Makati Business Club (MBC) are also bullish on the economy as a result of the ouster of Estrada.

An MBC survey on Jan. 24-31 found that 66 percent of the respondents expected the economy to improve from last year. In contrast, an MBC survey on Jan. 4-19 when Estrada was still in power found that 85.3 percent of the respondents expected the economy to worsen.

MBC executive director Guillermo Luz said the radical shift in business sentiments showed that a change in the country's top leadership was crucial to bringing back confidence in the economy.

The first MBC survey this year covered 102 of the 700 MBC members and the second, 82.

The MBC survey also listed the concerns of businessmen that the Macapagal administration must address: budget deficit and revenue efforts; governance and corruption; garbage problem; prosecution of Estrada and his cronies; the economy; peace and order; appointment of government officials; and investor confidence.

Shortly after Ms Macapagal assumed office, Raul T. Concepcion, chair of the Federation of Philippines Industries, upgraded his forecast of the growth in gross domestic product (GDP) to 2-2.5 percent in the first quarter of the year from his previous target of 1-1.5 percent.

Concepcion said he was confident the economy would reach the National Economic and Development Authority's GDP growth forecast of 3.5-4 percent this year mainly due to a recovery in consumer and investor confidence.

### Participation in rallies

The SWS survey showed intense popular interest in events surrounding Estrada's ouster.

Some 13 percent of the respondents said they took part in the rallies from Jan. 16 to Jan. 20, either for or against Estrada.

Rallies started when senators judging Estrada's impeachment trial voted on Jan. 16 to bar prosecutors from bank records they said would prove he grew rich off bribes and kickbacks.

Prosecutors resigned, calling the vote a virtual acquittal.

Protests formed in Manila and other cities within an hour and kept up virtually around the clock until Estrada left Malacañang.

The poll also showed 86 percent of Manila residents watched the Senate vote live on television and 80 percent said it was "unjust."

Some 79 percent of respondents said they also watched as Ms Macapagal was sworn in live on television on Jan. 20, while 2 percent said they attended the Mass at the Edsa Shrine.

### Better Cabinet secretaries

On Ms Macapagal's Cabinet appointees, 32 percent of the respondents in the SWS survey said her choices were better than Estrada's. Fifteen (15) percent said her choices were worse.

The SWS said appraisals on Ms Macapagal's toughness, compassion, honesty and effectiveness were modest compared with Estrada's during the "honeymoon stage."

The survey also showed that senator-judges in the impeachment trial who voted for the opening of the envelope containing evidence on the P3.2-billion bank account of Estrada, were the respondents' choice for senators if elections were held on Jan. 27.

Their No. 1 choice was Sen. Juan Flavier (60 percent). He was followed by Sen. Franklin Drilon (53 percent).

The others who made it to the "Magic 12" were Rep. Joker Arroyo (46 percent), Sen. Sergio Osmeña III (44), Ramon Magsaysay Jr., (42), lawyer Francis Pangilinan (40), broadcaster Noli de Castro (38), Sen. Miriam Santiago (37), former Defense Secretary Orlando Mercado (34), Rep. Ralph Recto (33), former Press Secretary Ricardo Puno (32) and former House Speaker Manny Villar (30).

In the survey, Metro Manila residents' top choices for Ms Macapagal's vice president were Sen. Raul Roco and Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. Both men saw 30 percent of the respondents picking them as their choice.

The SWS survey has a margin of error of a little more than plus or minus 5.7 percent. *With a report from AP*

# Santo Tomas . . .

(From page A1)

Bañez served as deputy BIR commissioner during the term of President Fidel Ramos.

Corona said Malacañang had not yet decided on who would replace retired Gen. Lisandro Abadia as national security adviser.

The President announced the other night that she was recalling Abadia's appointment, which had been loudly criticized by various sectors because of his supposed involvement in a pension fund scam.

Corona also said Malacañang would name a permanent spokesperson for the President.

He said the preference was for someone knowledgeable in finance and economics.

According to Corona, "the problem" with spokespersons like himself and former Press Secretaries Michael Toledo, Ricardo Puno and Fernando Barican is that they are all lawyers.

"And when you start questioning us about the intricacies of finance and economics, (at a certain point) we cannot really explain," he said.

Corona said one person being considered for the post, but whom he refused to identify, was both a lawyer and an economist.

He said Malacañang hoped to fill up the vacant slots in the Cabinet this week.

However, he said that the new agriculture secretary might be named next week, and that there was still no final decision on who would get the health portfolio.

There was also no word on who will be the next vice president and concurrent foreign secretary.

# Now, it's Weng who's set to testify vs Erap

(From page A1)

Sen. Franklin Drilon also warned the DOJ against "planted" witnesses who could sabotage the justice department's efforts to prosecute Estrada.

Businessman Mark Jimenez, a close friend of Estrada, has already executed an affidavit against Estrada. He is now under the DOJ witness protection program.

Edward S. Serapio, a personal lawyer of Estrada, also wants to cooperate with government lawyers.

Perez said he was still weighing the offer of Ang, a member of Estrada's "inner circle," to help prosecutors build a corruption case against the former President.

"Atong's lawyer has met with us and said his client was willing to testify," Perez said over radio station dzBB. "However, he does not want to give a deposition in the Philippines, and wants to do it abroad."

Witnesses in Estrada's aborted impeachment trial had earlier testified that Ang helped the deposed leader siphon off P130 million in tobacco taxes and set up a lucrative protection racket on jueteng, an illegal numbers game.

Perez said he expected other Estrada cronies to come forward and testify. But he said not all of them might be accommodated since "the most common motive is to save themselves from prosecution."

### Fugitives from justice

The Department of Foreign Affairs canceled the passports of Charlie "Atong" Ang and Yolanda Ricaforte, who both left the country to escape criminal prosecution. The two have been linked to the "jueteng" payoffs to Estrada.

Acting Foreign Secretary Lauro Baja Jr. canceled Ang's and Ricaforte's passports yesterday following a written request of the DOJ on Jan. 23.

The DOJ said Ang and Ricaforte were considered "fugitives from justice" since they left the country to evade an ongoing criminal investigation and probable prosecution for plunder and corruption—two of the several charges filed against Estrada with the Office of the Ombudsman.

The Philippine Passport Act of 1996 provides that the DFA can cancel a person's passport if the person has to serve a criminal sentence or if one is considered a fugitive from justice.

Without valid passports, Ang and Ricaforte have become illegal aliens who are subject to deportation.

Baja, however, admitted that canceling their passports was only "the first step" in getting Ang and Ricaforte to return to the country.

He said the decision to deport them was up to the government of the country where the two were staying.

"I don't know if the country of sojourn will deport them. We don't even know where they are," Baja said.

"It's always difficult to get back Filipinos who have left because we can't bodily take them. So we have to do it through the diplomatic and judicial processes."

Records showed the DFA issued Passport No. DD065712 to Charlie T. Ang, 42, on Feb. 2, 1998, and Passport No. EE370387 to Yolanda T. Ricaforte, 49, on April 12, 1999.

Ricaforte allegedly served as Estrada's auditor for his jueteng collections.

On Jan. 19, the day before Estrada was ousted, Ang left for Hong Kong and Ricaforte for the United States.

The DFA yesterday ordered the country's embassies and consular offices to immediately notify Manila once they have "confiscated" the canceled passports of Ang and Ricaforte.

### As guilty as Estrada

Lawyer JV Bautista, convenor of the Anti-Trapo Movement, criticized Perez for inviting Jimenez, Ang and Serapio to testify against the former President.

"These people are just as guilty as Estrada. They are the very people who connived with Estrada to commit graft and corruption," Bautista said in a press conference.

For its part, the fisherfolk group Pamalakaya urged President Macapagal-Arroyo to pursue the graft and plunder charges against her predecessor and his cronies.

Pamalakaya expressed apprehension over cronies turning the tables against Estrada to escape criminal charges.

"The nominees for 'Johnny Come Lately' and 'Too Late the Hero' awardees are growing each day, Estrada's former comrades have been deserting him to avoid possible charges, sequestration and freeze of (their) assets," Pamalakaya national chair Rodolfo Sambajon said in a statement.

Drilon, a justice secretary under the Ramos administration, said he was "suspicious" about the witnesses who are "coming out of the woodwork" after Estrada was ousted.

"We should be very careful against this because once the cases are filed and the witnesses are presented, the prosecution is bound by the testimony of these witnesses," he said.

"If the witnesses are not committed to the cause of the prosecution, they could throw a monkey wrench in the case. That could result in the acquittal of whoever is the accused," Drilon said.

He said that when he was justice secretary there were a number of witnesses who approached him in several controversial cases. They turned out to be planted witnesses.

He cited the case against Calauan, Laguna Mayor Antonio Sanchez who was sentenced to seven life terms for the rape-slay of UP student Aileen Sarmenta and the murder of her friend Allan Gomez.

### Cronies not to blame

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) told Joseph Victor Ejercito, a son of Estrada, not to blame his father's cronies for Estrada's downfall.

"For the children of the former President to blame his friends for his downfall is simply myopic and wrongly directed. The former President went down in disgrace . . . not because of his friends but because he himself had chosen . . . to do immoral acts," Archbishop Orlando Quevedo, president of the CBCP, said in a statement.

Quevedo was reacting to Ejercito's appeal to Estrada's cronies not to turn against the former President. *With reports from Juliet L. Javellana and Norman Bordadora*

# Welcoat-Shark series on

**GAMES TODAY** *(Makati Coliseum)*
3:30 p.m.—Montaña vs Blu (best-of-3)
5:30 p.m. Welcoat vs Shark (best-of-7)

By Dennis U. Eroa

EVEN Welcoat coach Junel Baculi is convinced: Shark is ripe for the championship.

"We have to be prepared. The series is a toss-up between both teams. Shark is hungrier but we have the hearts of champions," he said.

The Paintmasters swept the Energy Drink Kings, 4-0, in the Chairman's Cup. Baculi, however, cautioned that Shark is a new-look team in the PBL Challenge Cup at the Makati Coliseum.

BACULI

AUSTRIA

Game One of the best-of-seven series is set today at 5:30 p.m., after the 3:30 p.m. curtain-raiser for third between Blu Sun Power and Montaña Jewels.

In a determined bid to plug the loopholes, Shark team owner Raul Panlilio recruited 6-foot-7 Irvin Sotto, 6-foot-3 Erwin Velez and pointguard Warren Ybañez.

"Like us, Shark has the big men, the slashers, the pointguards and the wingmen," said Baculi, who is eyeing his fourth straight title.

Leo Austria, in his second final appearance, promised there'll be no sweep. He joked to scribes: "If there is a sweep, the honor should belong to us."

Seriously, Austria said his team is determined to exact revenge. "We know what to do against a deadly foe."

Welcoat plays it deliberately, while Shark is known for its sudden change of pace.

Yancy de Ocampo, Ren Ren Ritualo, Anton Villoria, Jojo Manalo, Eugene Tan, Francis Zamora and Celino Cruz will banner Welcoat's bid.

Shark pins its title-aspirations on Roger Yap, Chester Tolomia, Egay Echavez, Ryzal Castro and Gilbert Malabanan.

## Iligan booters prevail

BACOLOD CITY—La Salle Academy of Iligan bounced back from an opening day draw with host West Negros College by crushing P. Guevarra Memorial High of Laguna, 5-2, Tuesday in the 17th Coke Go-for-Goal under-16 national football finals at the Paglaum Sports Complex here.

National Capital Region champion De La Salle Zobel and Davao's University of Mindanao battle to a scoreless draw in the other mach.

## Derby tonight

BREAKING all previous records in crowd attendance at Mandaluyong Coliseum, the highly successful "Mandaluyong 9-Cock International Derby" enters its semifinal round at 6 tonight. Sponsors are Pagcor-Casino Filipino and Sagupaan Super Feeds in cooperation with Lakpue Drug Inc.

## Roligon tilt up

AN EXPLOSIVE encounter takes center stage tonight at Roligon Mega Cockpit as the ongoing RMC 11th Anniversary Derby enters its sixth phase with the league's cream of the crop joining the fray for the first time.

DGP-3 Farm owner Boyet Plaza, Iking Araneta, Boy Jiao, Robert So, Sonny Lagon and Cong. Peping Cojuangco lead the list of participants.

# San Miguel prevails as Ildefonso stays

**GAMES TOMORROW** (Philsports)
5:15 p.m. — Mobiline vs Shell
7:30 p.m. — Pop Cola vs Red Bull

By Marc Anthony Reyes

DANNY Ildefonso quickly made a statement following his return to San Miguel Beer last night.

It came in the form of a low-arched three-pointer from top of the key, the Beermen's first basket en route to a 92-88 beating of Barangay Ginebra at Philsports.

The crowd readily applauded Ildefonso's homecoming gesture, something that was unimaginable just a few hours earlier.

Just before midnight on Tuesday, he finally signed up with SMB, agreeing to a three-year contract worth P18 million in basic wage.

Ildefonso and the Beermen wrapped up the controversial negotiations that pushed through after Tanduay Gold gave up its pursuit of the 6-foot-6 slotman.

"I'm happy that it all ended," said Ildefonso. "Now I can push through with my basketball career."

Fortunately, that's what Ildefonso does best, acting as a pillar in SMB's formidable arsenal that proved too much for the Gin Kings, who trailed by as many as 21 points.

He scored just five points but that was enough to stabilize the franchise rocked by the player's tumultuous contract negotiations.

Coach Eric Altamirano marked his return to the PBA with a bang, steering Purefoods to a 75-66 rout of Tanduay Gold in the first game.

# CPJ taekwondo meet set

SLOTS on the 2001 Philippine team will be up for grabs as the Philippine Taekwondo Association stages the CPJ Memorial Championships at 9 a.m. on Sunday Feb. 4 at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium.

According to PTA president Robert N. Aventajado, winners will undergo rigorous training for participation in the US Open Championships, World Cup, Chung Chung Korea Open, Chun Chen Open, Asian Junior Championships, SEA Games, 15th World Championships and Universiade.

Teams to be prerensented include DLSU, UE, Ateneo, San Beda, UP-Los Baños, FEU, ISM, UST, Don Bosco Makati & Mandaluyong, Las Piñas, LSGH, Baguio, Batangas, DLSU-Dasmariñas, Davao, General Santos, Cagayan de Oro, Laguna, Pampanga, Bulacan, ACTA, Naga, Bacolod, Iloilo, , PMA, PAF, Army, Navy, GHQ PNP and PMMA.

# Panel defers BAP action

THE PHILIPPINE Olympic Committee deferred its action on the Basketball Association of the Philippines disorder after two key figures in the leadership crisis failed to appear during yesterday's hearing.

Claudio Altura, chair of the POC's arbitration committee, scheduled the next hearing on Feb. 7 where he is expecting to hear the testimonies of BAP legal counsel Boni Alentajan and secretary general Graham Lim.

He added Quintellano "Tiny" Literal and Freddie Jalasco, leaders of contending parties in the BAP tug-of-war, had rationalized and defended their stand.

Aside from Literal and Jalasco, Gonzalo "Lito" Puyat and Region IV director Johnny Tam were also present during the hearing, which was attended by softball's Rene Adad, rowing's Benjie Ramos and lawyer Victor Africa.

Meanwhile, umpires Eugene Nova, Rogel Ponte and deputy referee Rufinito Francisco claimed Dante Boquirin, secretary general of the Table Tennis Association of the Philippines, facilitated the release of allowances intended for 8 umpires who were not present during the Batang Pinoy Games in Sta. Cruz, Laguna. *June Navarro*

## RACING TIPS AT SAN LAZARO BY MR. 999

Race 1—1. Ananpour 2. Touch of Jax 3. Gallop for Gold 4. Solitaire
Race 2—1. West Prado 2. El Robusto 3. Bullhorn
Race 3—1. Clear My Way 2. Corporate Law 3. Achilles Heels 4. Hearts on Fire
Race 4—1. Extraordinaire 2. Belle D Amour 3. Breakaway Artist 4. Allusion
Race 5—1. The Magician 2. Bulwak 3. El Bulldog 4. Brave Alliance
Race 6—1. Portal Dancer 2. Santa Fe 3. Time for Miracles 4. Royal Angel
Race 7—1. Tme and Again 2. Clear Night Sky 3. Always Remember 4. Time is Gold
Race 8—1. Key to Heaven 2. Nagniningning 3. Altron 4. Noble Heart
Race 9—1. Daylaimee 2. Dixie Melody 3. Yoko Lady 4. Top Dancer

# 'Bayan of Superscars'

**SPECTATOR**

*Al S. Mendoza*

**BIG BASH.** Bun Yao's friends from sports are expected to troop to Emmanuel Café tonight and tomorrow night for the joint's anniversary bash on Kalayaan Avenue in Quezon City. A two-day buffet lunch and dinner from today is on the menu for only P150 each. As usual, the Emmanuel Band will do their usual fare of Sixties music bannered by the Beatles, Rolling Stones, Zombies, Monkees, Bukinghams, DC 5, Everly Brothers, Bee Gees, Kinks and Doors. Golf rules man Vince Villafuerte, who has been there once, might just show up together with Trivia man Bong Barrameda and motoring journalist Vernon Sarne.

■

IT USED to be that the PBA is known as the "Bayan of Superstars."

Not anymore, fellas.

The PBA is now known as the "Bayan of Superscars."

The first scar came when Commissioner Jun Bernardino barred Danny Ildefonso from marching in the PBA's opening ceremonies on Sunday as a Beerman. His reason: For being teamless yet, Ildefonso had no right to be in the PBA party.

Ugh!

Ildefonso teamless?

San Miguel Beer was Ildefonso's team on that fateful Sunday since San Miguel owned the right of first refusal on the cager's playing career.

A precedent was the Benjie Paras case a while back. Benjie wanted to move to Ginebra but Shell, also invoking its right of first refusal, blocked it—with success. Benjie soon found himself resuiting for Shell.

In the Ildefonso case, it was not SMB that blocked Ildefonso's wish to move to Tanduay. It was Bernardino.

Going by league rules, Bernardino's veto was legal.

But going by ethical standards, I deem that move was unethical. It just effectively inflicted the league's second scar.

Most often, moral sense is better than legal sense.

Wasn't it morally correct then to have allowed Ildefonso to march as a Beerman on Sunday rather than bar him from the ceremonies?

Have we not kept bandying the word around that the PBA is family? Was declaring Ildefonso not part of PBA family that Sunday enough to justify Bernardino's action? Using the technicality approach, wasn't Ildefonso still with SMB that day since SMB has not released the cager to another team?

And, yes, what harm would have been done, what law would have been ***substantially*** broken, if he had been allowed to march as a Beerman?

Look, this was our MVP only last year. His only crime—if it can be called that—was a desire for financial security, which for the record, he did not seek but was dangled to him.

If at all, Kume's move to boot Ildefonso out of the parade scarred the commissioner's office to almost beyond repair.

And going back to Tanduay's offer sheet. I can't buy the Honorable Kume's line that said offer sheet of P96 million spread over 16 years to Ildefonso was flawed.

Since when is providing financial security to a person flawed?

We applauded when Tiger Woods got a $130-million deal with Nike.

We applauded when Venus Williams got a $42-million deal with Reebok.

Not too long ago, we applauded when Michael Jordan got a $60-million deal with Nike.

And, yes, we applauded when Anna Kournikova got a $20-million (or was it more?) deal with Adidas by just merely wearing fashion-setting tennis attires—never mind that she has yet to win a Slam event, not to mention a major tournament.

If there is as flawed a move seen on the PBA backyard the past few days, it is not Tanduay's extra-generous act of ensuring Ildefonso's future but rather, the Kume's decision to shoot the offer sheet down, shotgun style, like a hapless bird in flight.

If there's any crazier idea than offering a life of wealth to a cager not endowed with Air Jordan moves, it is Kume's merciless, if not senseless, decision to embarrass the league's MVP and then torpedo the cager's juicy retirement package. Next, he cloaked both decisions with what Senator Biazon termed as "legal gobbledygook."

Indeed, the PBA has been transformed from "Bayan of Superstars" to "Bayan of Superscars."

I rest my case.

17A
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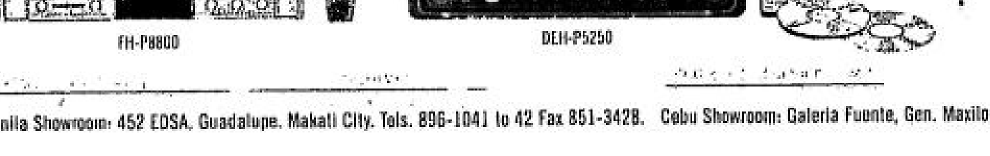

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# SPORTS

AL S. MENDOZA, Editor ■ EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA, Assistant Editor

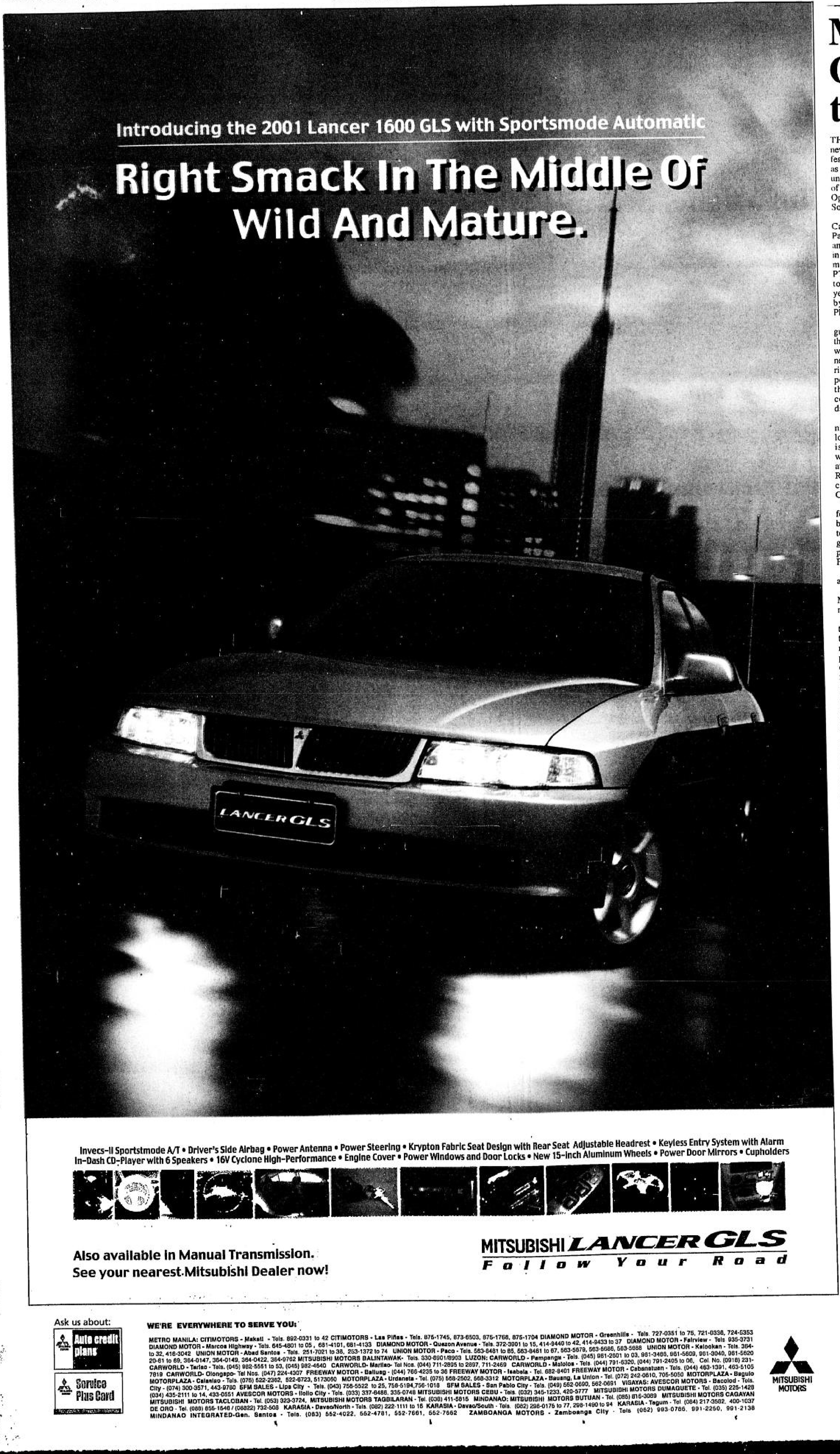
## La Salle cagebelles win Ncraa

LA SALLE rallied from 11 points down in the final period to edge Lyceum of the Philippines, 54-51, yesterday and retain the women's basketball title in the 8th McDonald's-National Capital Region Athletic Association (Ncraa) at the Makati Coliseum. La Salle wrapped up the series, 2-1.

## Sports on TV

By Lorenzo Manguiat

**BASKETBALL:** US NCAA - Michigan State Spartans vs Michigan Wolverines at 11:30 a.m., NC State Wolfpack vs Wake Forest Demon Deacons at 11 p.m. and Maryland Terrapins vs Virginia Cavaliers tomorrow at 1 a.m. on ESPN
NBA – LA Lakers vs Minnesota Timberwolves at 5:30 p.m. on IBC 13
**GOLF:** PGA Phoenix Open, Final Day at 8 a.m. (r) and Highlights at 9 p.m. on Star Sports



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MITSUBISHI MOTORS

## MRT Open today

THE DAWNING of a new era in Philippine professional golf takes shape as a new local circuit is unveiled with the staging of the MRT-Southwoods Open starting today at the Southwoods Masters.

Asian Tour standout Cassius Casas, Robert Pactolerin, Mars Pucay and most of the top pros in the land headline the 60-man roster of the P700,000 three-in-one tourney kicking off a year-long tour presented by College Assurance Plan.

The pros tee off shotgun style at 8:30 a.m. as they go for extra money with their amateur partners—among them celebrities, dignitaries and corporate executives—for the pro-am side-event covering the first two days.

"Happy days are definitely here again for our local pros. The new tour is something we've worked out in consideration of their plight," said Robert John Sobrepeña, chair of the Fil-Estate Group of Companies.

An organizing team formed by Sobrepeña will be conducting three more tournaments with a bigger prize money in an explosive summer bang at Fil-Estate courses.

Eight more stages are afoot.

Meanwhile, Frankie Miñoza endorsed the formation of the new tour.

"My only wish is that our local pros will take this chance with the right attitude. The competition abroad has become very tough and I'm really happy to hear that there's a new tour with a long-term plan which is for the good of everybody," said Miñoza from his Del Monte home.

The pros will be vying for a top prize of P100,000 with prizes scaled all the way down to 30th place. A separate prize package has been allotted for a 36-hole CAP Seniors Challenge.

The absence of Philippine Open champion Gerald Rosales, who is playing in the Thailand Masters, gives Cassius Casas a strong chance to post his first victory since last year's Philippine Masters.

## Milo Jr netfest in Subic

TRUE to its commitment of supporting junior tennis development in the country, Nestle Philippines kicks off another year of discoveries when the Subic Bay Yacht Club hosts this weekend the 2001 Milo Junior Tennis Cup and Regional Workshop.

The 11-year-old Milo netfest organized by the Children's Television Workshop and supported by the official outfitter Adidas and PTV-4 Sunday weekly show Sports Kids is sanctioned by Philippine Tennis Association (Philta) for its valuable contribution.

The first of 11 Milo legs is being coordinated with Jojo Ampoloquio of Subic Bay Yacht Club, Olongapo Tennis Club president Divina Riego de Dios and Balanga Tennis Club prexy Ed Tiambeng.

Deadline for registration in the boys' and girls' 18-under, 16-under, 14-under, 12-under and the unisex 10-under divisions is set tomorrow at 9 a.m. at the Yacht Club hardcourts with the draw to follow immediately.

- **Foreign detainees want investigation of BI officials** A19

# METRO

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

## 179 dzRH workers to be retrenched

### 'Something will explode,' says employee

BY ALCUIN PAPA

**A TOTAL of 179 employees of the country's number 1 radio station on the AM band would be losing their jobs by the end of February.**

Management of dzRH, 666 khz on the radio dial, announced this on Friday, surprising members of the staff of the oldest radio station in the Philippines.

Yesterday, it was still business as usual for the employees. But the atmosphere in the workplace was one of fear and loathing, although everything seemed normal in the newsroom when the INQUIRER went there yesterday.

"We feel like Mayon Volcano right now," said a staff member who asked for anonymity. "Anytime now, something will explode and all hell will break loose here."

The employees who would be retrenched include reporters, writers, production staff members, members of the drama division and employees of the provincial stations and other departments.

The Manila Broadcasting Co. owns dzRH.

Another member of the staff said the morale of the employees was down and no one really wanted to work after the announcement was made at 5 p.m. Friday.

"People don't want to work," the

179 DZRH/ A18

## Concerned citizen arrests 2 BIR agents for extort

BY STELLA O. GONZALES

THIS is the essence of people empowerment.

A law-abiding citizen effected a citizen's arrest and nabbed two Bureau of Internal Revenue officers who had just allegedly extorted P100,000 from Korean companies in Cavite.

CONCERNED/ A18

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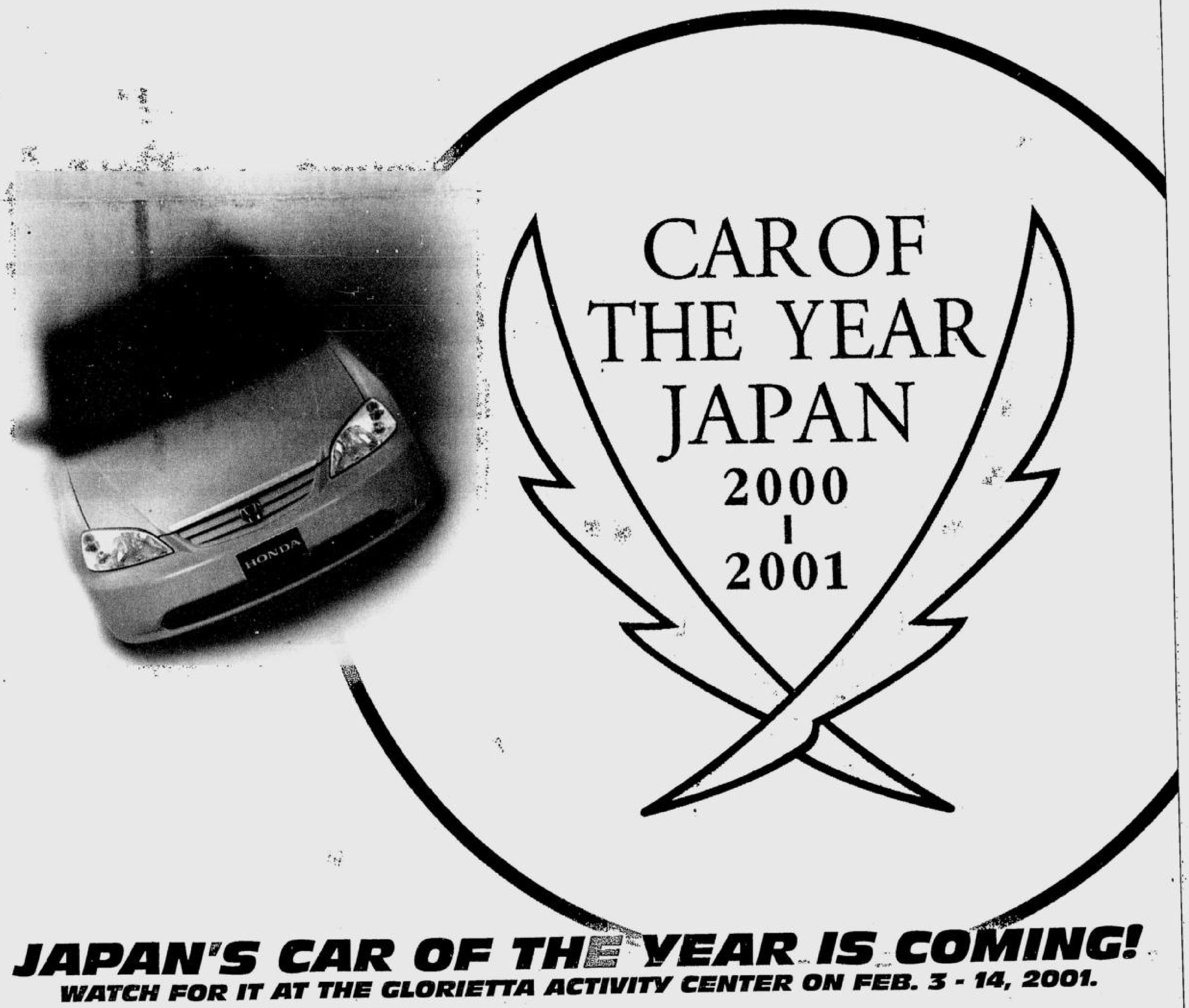
THURSDAY FEBRUARY 1

HONDA



JAPAN'S CAR OF THE YEAR IS COMING!
WATCH FOR IT AT THE GLORIETTA ACTIVITY CENTER ON FEB. 3 - 14, 2001.

Conducted by Japan Car of the Year Committee

# Makati wins 23 medals

MAKATI Mayor Elenita S. Binay yesterday congratulated the delegates of the city government to "Batang Pinoy 2001" for bagging 23 medals in the recently concluded sports meet in Sta. Cruz, Laguna.

"Batang Pinoy," a national sports competition for students in all levels in both private and public schools, aims to develop sportsmanship among students all over the country. It involves 15 regions and 63 cities.

According to Councilor Jejomar Erwin Binay, officer in charge of the city's Youth and Sport Development Department, Makati sent 16 delegates, 14 swimmers and two track and field athletes.

"I applaud them for a job well done, though we are less in numbers compared to other delegates," he said.

Makati ranked fourth in the overall national competition with five gold, six silvers and 12 bronze medals.

Among the delegates were Ryan Paolo Arabeo, Ferdinand Frigillana, Carla Gonzales, Marinela Arabejo, Mark Arlon Dacanay, Ali Frigillana, Christian de Veyra and his sister Vanessa, Leah Navato, Erica Natividad, Kimberly Uy, Kendrick Uy, Leonor Capistrano and Roberto Batumbacal in swimming and Eduardo Orbina and Eduardo Palomo in track and field.

Orbina won two bronze medals in the 100- and 200- meter run and Palomo one bronze medal in the 50-meter run.

DE LOS ANGELES

## Missing

ENGINEER George Borromeo de los Angeles, 28, of 3-E 15th Avenue, Murphy, Quezon City, left his place of work in Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City on Jan. 26 and has not been seen or heard of since.

His wife, Nelia, 33, who also works at the Procurement Office in Camp Aguinaldo, said her husband left his office in the camp around noon and was reported to be headed toward the Meralco building in Pasig City.

De los Angeles, a native of Calapan, Oriental Mindoro, was wearing a pair of gold-colored pants and checkered black polo shirt.

Any information on his whereabouts may be relayed to his wife at cell phone number 0917-396-8865.

## CHS reunion

THE COLLEGE of the Holy Spirit (CHS) class 1976 celebrates its silver jubilee on Sunday, Feb. 4, at the school grounds in Mendiola, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The affair will be marked by a Holy Mass, giving of donations to teachers and the alumni board and a song number by the alumni.

Registration starts 8 a.m. For details, call Jovie Galan at 895-8125.

# Malabon vice mayor, 7 councilors linked to P122-million town hall graft

By Christian V. Esguerra

MALABON Vice Mayor Mark Allan Yambao and seven administration councilors have been named respondents in the graft case against Mayor Amado Vicencio involving the allegedly spurious deal for the construction of a P122-million new town hall.

In a 21-page reply affidavit, opposition Councilors Edilberto Torres and Chiqui Roque asked Ombudsman Aniano Desierto to include the local officials in the graft case for "hastily ratifying the anomalous agreement even in the absence of supporting documents."

Named respondents in the graft case were Vicencio's staunch supporters in the municipal council: Councilors Ejercito Aquino, Cynthia Gutierrez, Pablo Cabrera, Consuelo Pili, Roberto Romero, Lauro Borja and Benjamin Galauran.

Ferdie Tengson, head of the Malabon Pre-qualifications, Bids and Awards Committee (PBAC) Secretariat, municipal engineer Ulyses Tombocon, and planning officer Gloria Tamayo were also included in the charges for preparing the documents for the allegedly anomalous construction agreement.

The respondents were said to have given "unwarranted benefit, advantage, and preference to unqualified, unlicensed, and nonexistent contractors through manifest partiality," the opposition councilors alleged in the affidavit.

The Inquirer tried to get the comments of the local officials, but they were either in a meeting or unavailable for comment.

Yambao and the administration councilors were included in the charges after they allegedly "railroaded" the ratification of the contractors' application upon the orders of Vicencio, Torres told the Inquirer.

By sheer majority, the councilors managed to approve the application in December 1999 even without reviewing pertinent documents, Torres added.

As a result, the construction agreement was shown to be beset with irregularities that could have been corrected had the municipal council not approved it hastily, the opposition councilor pointed out. This was the basis of criminal and administrative charges against Vicencio and other local officials filed before the Office of the Ombudsman.

In the graft case, the municipal government allegedly pre-qualified the joint venture of Sergcon Development corp. and Principal Management Group Inc. (PMGI).

But Vicencio allegedly awarded the construction rights to PMGI and Serg Construction, said to be an entirely different company from Sergcon.

The mayor denied the allegations and said the discrepancy in the names of the contractors was simply an honest mistake.

Torres and Roque recently asked the Ombudsman to suspend Vicencio while the issue was being investigated.

But the opposition councilors claimed the Ombudsman junked the motion to suspend the mayor without giving any reasons.

# A lesson from Erap's downfall

ON TARGET

*Ramon Tulfo*

IF THERE'S a lesson you can learn from President Erap's downfall, it's that when one is no longer in power, he finds out who his real friends are.

Real friends are people who will stand by you when the going gets tough—for you and for them.

Erap saw who his real friends were during the last minutes of his hold on power.

***

**Up until the last day of Erap's presidency, I never admired former Executive Secretary Edgardo Angara.**

**But when he stood by Erap when everybody was already deserting the fallen leader, Angara became seven feet tall in my eyes.**

**Up to the very end, Angara acted as Erap's "Little President," trying to strike a bargain for his boss with the incoming leadership.**

**Angara may look like a sissy with his glasses, but he's more macho than any big hunk of a man. He showed strength of character during those last minutes with Erap.**

***

I also doff my hat to former Press Secretary Dong Puno, former Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Antonio Cerilles and Puerto Princesa City Mayor Edward Hagedorn.

Puno, Cerilles and Hagedorn risked the scorn of the nation for supporting Erap to the very end. They saw the President leave Malacañang.

I'm sure countless people—even those who hate Erap—were touched at the sight of Brig. Gen. Rodulfo Diaz crying unashamedly while he escorted his ward out of Malacañang. Diaz until then was chief of the Presidential Security Group (PSG). He was loyal to the end.

***

**Men who cry are not sissies. I read somewhere that men who cry when they're overcome with emotions have stronger character than those who don't. Men who cry are more able to cope with personal crises than those who don't.**

**Why? Because tears have a cleansing effect, not only on the eyes but also on the emotions. Men who cry are less likely to get a heart attack than those who bottle up their feelings.**

***

Sen. Franklin Drilon, that big hunk of a man, cried after that now historic decision was made not to open the controversial second envelope during the impeachment trial.

Did people laugh at Drilon?

If a survey were to be held today, Drilon would top the list in popularity among all 10 senators who voted for the opening of the envelope.

***

**It was his crying in public, witnessed by millions of people, during the 1989 coup attempt that sent then Armed Forces chief of staff Gen. Rodolfo Biazon to the Senate.**

**Biazon was overcome with emotions after he learned some of his former men in the Marines had taken part in the coup.**

**The macho Biazon was caught on TV camera crying unashamedly.**

***

Although millions of anti-Erap citizens want the former President jailed for plundering the nation, they look with derision at his supposed friends who have volunteered to testify against him.

Mark Jimenez, Charlie "Atong" Ang, Edward S. Serapio have become what the police refer to as stool pigeons. These are criminals who tell on their fellow criminals.

Although police pat them on the back for squealing on their fellow criminals, police look at squealers with contempt.

***

**Look, I'm not saying Ang, Jimenez and Serapio are committing a criminal act by testifying against Erap. Neither am I saying that they're criminals.**

**What I'm saying is many people won't trust them anymore. Even their friends will look at them with suspicion.**

**To many people they are *ahas*. Who would want to get bitten by serpents?**

***

You can't blame Jimenez and Ang for volunteering to testify against Erap, their former benefactor, because they want to save their own skin.

But many people can't understand why Serapio, Erap's lawyer, would testify against his client.

*Anak ng pating, ano'ng klaseng abogado ka?*

Serapio is violating the confidentiality of lawyer-client relationship.

It's like a priest- confessor making public what was told to him in the confessional.

***

**President Macapagal's comment — that she would not be sleeping in the presidential bed in Malacañang because a lot of Erap's women could have slept in it — was in bad taste.**

**Putting it bluntly, the President was being bitchy.**

**"*Kung sinu-sino na ang natulog diyan*," she was quoted as saying.**

**If the President reads the Bible, as she claims she does, why doesn't she read the passage where Jesus said: "Let him who is without sin cast the first stone."**

**Think about it, deeply, Madame President. You know what that means.**

# Hit-and-run driver sought

MANILA police are looking for the driver of a gray Pajero that ran over a 40-year-old truck helper who was crossing the Del Pan Bridge in Binondo before dawn yesterday.

Ramil Laurente, of Valderama Street in Tondo, Manila, died after the Pajero crushed his limbs and torso, said Supt. Roberto de la Rosa, chief of the Western Police District Traffic Enforcement Office.

Laurente had just come from work in Port Area and was crossing Del Pan Bridge on his way to San Nicolas, Binondo when the north-bound Pajero hit him at about 1:30 a.m., police said.

Witnesses said the impact threw Laurente a few meters away. The Pajero stopped for a few seconds but ran over Laurente, who was already bleeding and unconscious, then dragged him on the road, witnesses said. *Jerome Aning*

# 4 charged with selling fake land titles

By Christian V. Esguerra

POLICE on Tuesday filed large-scale estafa charges against a couple and two others suspected to be part of a syndicate selling fake land titles.

Charged before the Valenzuela prosecutor's office were Virgilio Chico, 49, and his wife Teresita, of Blk. 16, Molino Homes II, Dasmariñas, Cavite; Myrna Jaravata, 53, of JP Rizal Street, Binan, Laguna; and Ric Fortuno, 45, of Bilibid Viejo, Quiapo, Manila.

Each suspect posted a P40,000 bail and was released just before Judge Clifford Ganay of Regional Trial Court Branch 31 in Agoo, La Union could issue warrants for their arrest, said Supt. Nemesion Neron, the Valenzuela police chief.

Neron said the suspects are also facing multiple estafa charges in La Union.

The suspected swindlers were arrested after businessman William Lim, 42, of Kabesang Porong Street, Punturin, Valenzuela complained that the four issued him a fake land title after he made an initial payment of P2 million.

Members of the Valenzuela Police Community Precinct 7 arrested the suspects on Jan. 27 at WL Food Product in Punturin, Valenzuela.

Lim had agreed to buy a 21,107-square-meter property in Dasmariñas, Cavite worth P20 million, investigation showed.

On Jan. 27, the two men and two women went to Lim's office to make the final arrangements.

Police said the Chico couple supposedly introduced themselves as Gemeniano Antonio and Constancia Briones, owners of the Cavite property, and presented a copy of Transfer Certificate of Title No. 11111 (RT20022).

Lim then issued a check worth P2 million as initial payment, police said.

Investigation showed that when Lim examined the transfer certificate, he found it to be phony.

# Gordon tells people to 'clean your backyard'

HAVE clean environment, will attract tourists.

Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon yesterday exhorted Filipinos to do their share of promoting tourism in the country by cleaning up their own backyard.

Gordon, former chair of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, led officials and employees of other government agencies in cleaning up Roxas Boulevard from the Ninoy Aquino International Airport in Pasay to Manila.

He stressed that apart from sprucing up buildings and streets, Filipinos should keep their surroundings clean to lure more tourists into the country.

"We don't need pretty sights," he told a crowd of government officials and employees. "We have a lot of these already. What we need is that when tourists, including Filipino *balikbayan*, come in they will see that we care for our country.

"If we don't know how to care for our environment, nobody is going to believe us. To ease the burden of others, we must be like the President and flex muscles. If we do that, two million tourists will come in. That means two million jobs."

Gordon, credited for turning the former US naval base in Olongapo into a major economic zone after the 1991 eruptions of Mt. Pinatubo, helped Metro Aides in collecting twigs and fallen leaves and loading them into garbage bags in front of Nayong Pilipino near the airport.

"This isn't an operation 'linis' for show," he said. "We should do this every day. Ordinary Filipinos should make it a point to do this every day to spare government employees the job of picking up someone else's trash."

Next on Gordon's list of places in dire need of thorough cleanup is Intramuros. "We'll go there and clean it up because it's part of our heritage," he said. "If you'll visit Intramuros nowadays, you'll be sad."

Gordon also revealed his plans to meet with administrators of several colleges and universities in Metro Manila to stress the need for the youth to be educated on the proper care of the environment.

Helping Gordon in the drive were personnel from the Department of Tourism, Philippine Tourism Authority, Metro Manila Development Authority, Department of Public Works and Highways, Nayong Pilipino, the Manila International Airport Authority and the Aviation Security Group, among others, as well as residents of barangays around the airport.

*TJ Burgonio*

GORDON

## THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, February 1, 2001
4th Week in Ordinary Time

**1st Reading:** Heb 12:18-19, 21-24
**Gospel:** Mk 6:7-13

Jesus called the Twelve to him and began to send them out two by two, giving them authority over evil spirits. And he ordered them to take nothing for the journey except a staff; no food, no bag, no money in their belts. They were to wear sandals and were not to take an extra tunic.

And he added, "In whatever house you are welcomed, stay there until you leave the place. If any place doesn't receive you and the people refuse to listen to you, leave after shaking the dust off your feet. It will be a testimony against them."

So they set out to proclaim that this was the time to repent. They drove out many demons and healed many sick people by anointing them.

**Commentary:**

*Christianity is a call not just to follow Jesus, which is what discipleship is about, but ultimately to be sent by Jesus. The whole purpose of the following is precisely in being sent (i.e., to become an apostle) to stand on behalf of Jesus. Being sent is not a task of substituting the master, but rather of representing him so that he remains present in his absence. When sent, the apostle is thus expected to do, not his own work, but the very work of Jesus: of preaching the good news to the poor, healing the sick, casting out devils. Ultimately, discipleship is really about a relationship of intimacy with the master as a friend (John 15:15). Only a friend of Jesus can stand as a credible witness to him.*

***Claretian Publications Inc., 8 Mayumi St., U.P. Village, Diliman, Quezon City, U.P. P.O. Box 4, Diliman, 1101 Quezon City; Tel.: 921-3984; Fax: 921-7429; E-mail: claret@cnl.net; Website: http://www.cnl.net/claret***

## SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

**CRIMINAL LAW (AGGRAVATING CIRCUMSTANCES)—Treachery—** For treachery to be appreciated, two essential elements must concur: (1) the employment of means of execution that gives the person attacked no opportunity to defend himself or to retaliate: and (2) the said means of execution was deliberately or consciously adopted. What is decisive is that the execution of the attack made it impossible for the victim to defend himself or retaliate. In this case, there is no clear showing that the victim could not defend himself when he was attacked. The fact that the attacker used a bladed weapon did not *per se* make the attack treacherous. Treachery must be proved by clear and convincing evidence or as conclusively as the killing itself. Any doubt as to the existence of treachery must be resolved in favor of the accused. Absent clear and convincing proof of treachery, appellant can only be convicted of homicide. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Quisumbing, *En Banc*, People v. Hilot, G.R. No. 129532, October 5, 2000]

Digest by R.B. Vera

# 179 DZRH workers to be retrenched (From page A17)

employee said. "Just look around you, it's like someone died here. In a sense, it's like the station is dying and that's sad because we gave our best efforts and our best years to the station. Yet this is what we get."

A certain number of employees have been given their termination papers. And waiting for their termination papers is driving the other employees crazy, the employees said.

"They are giving us hope but we know that there is none," one said.

About 80 employees have been identified as part of the first batch to be separated from service. The rest would belong to the "second wave" of terminations, which would be effective at the end of February.

The employees said management initially told them the station was losing money so some of the workers had to be let go.

But the employees said they do not believe this reason. They told INQUIRER: "We don't believe that because management just bought four mobile vans that cost P600,000."

That the notice of termination was given the employees only at 5 p.m. on Friday is also questionable, according to the employees.

"It seemed management was hiding something, releasing that notice only at the last minute," one employee said.

The head of the news department, Deo Macalma, did not want to comment on the terminations. Station manager Joe Taruc was also not available for comment. No one from management could be reached.

A woman, who spoke English with perfect diction, answered the Inquirer's last call at about 6 p.m. yesterday. She said to call back during office hours.

When asked who she was, the woman said she could not give her name because she was only a girl there, a clerk.

DZRH employees said they have consulted lawyers to contest the mass termination.

# Concerned citizen arrests 2 BIR agents... (From page A17)

Concerned citizen Armando Ducat Jr., a 50-year-old businessman, did so because he wants foreign firms to pay the correct taxes to the government, said Supt. Manuel Gaerlan, chief of the Cavite police provincial intelligence and investigation branch.

According to a report by Cavite provincial police director Senior Supt. Nestor Sanares, Ducat learned that the suspects have been extorting money from Korean companies at the Cavite Export Processing Zone Authority in exchange for the reduction of the firms' tax liabilities.

On Monday afternoon, Ducat received a tip that suspects Carlito Bohol and Wilma Enrique, who are assigned at the BIR Southern Tagalog office, demanded P500,000 for the reduction of a Korean company's tax liability that was estimated to be between P2 million and P5 million. The suspects decreased their demand to P100,000.

After the pay-off, Ducat and some companions stopped the suspects who were in Bohol's Toyota Revo. He made a citizen's arrest after he spotted P1,000 bills near Bohol's seat.

The suspects were presented by Ducat to Cavite export zone authorities and Cavite Gov. Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr. and later turned over to the Cavite police for investigation.

The police report said the suspects confessed to Revilla that they had been raking millions of pesos from their operations and they linked a ranking BIR official to their illegal acts. They even offered to return the money they received from one of the Korean firms.

On Tuesday, Bohol and Enrique were charged before the Cavite prosecutor's office with fraud and illegal exaction and transaction. They were released to the custody of a lawyer pending preliminary investigation.

But the story does not end here.

According to Superintendent Gaerlan, the Korean firms have not yet filed any complaint against the BIR officers and the case might not prosper because of this.

# Officers were 'busy' or absent during Binondo jailbreak, say investigators

BY JEROME ANING

ALL policemen at the Western Police District Station 11 in Binondo, Manila were either absent or busy with their duties when 10 inmates escaped from the detention cell last Friday.

But the WPD's general assignments section, which investigated the mass escape, believes that structural defects and improper layout of the station are to be blamed.

Station 11 commander Supt. Juanito de Guzman, platoon commander Senior Insp. Alfredo Opriasa and desk officer SPO4 Renato Romero were relieved by WPD director Chief supt. Avelino Razon after the escape.

But Razon on Tuesday reinstated De Guzman, who led a team that recaptured six of the inmates over the weekend.

Chief Insp. Arturo Paginawan, the head of the general assignments section who inspected Station 11 on Meisic Street shortly after the escape, said the police desk should be placed near the detention cell.

The cell and the desk are 35 steps apart and a wooden wall covers the lower portion of the cell, making it difficult for the desk officer to notice what is happening inside.

However, Paginawan said, the inmates took advantage of the fact that the station's personnel were busy with their duties when they escaped at about 3 a.m. Friday.

Romero was attending to calls and recording them on the radio blotter while the night-shift investigator, SPO4 Danilo Hermosura, was preparing a report in the computer room.

Two other policemen, including the one assigned to the jail, were on sick leave and Opriasa had to check the cell from time to time and advice Romero to do the same whenever he had to go out.

Both De Guzman and his deputy, Chief Insp. Edgardo Wycoco, were in their offices during the escape, Paglinawan said in his report.

More than a dozen inmates were inside the cell and 10 were able to escape. The *mayor* or cell administrator, robbery suspect Richard Sumagil, alerted Romero and Opriasa about the escape.

Inspection showed that the inmates used a length of wood to bend two steel bars of the cell. The opening they made led to an empty and unlocked cell.

The inmates made a hole in the ceiling, through which they went out.

Paglinawan said the wall should be torn down and the cell bars changed.

Police are still looking for four of the inmates who escaped — frustrated murder suspect Francisco Laurente, and robbery suspects Marvin Bondoc, Tomly Mejia and Bartolome Rosaroso.

# Foreign detainees want investigation of BI officials

BY ALCUIN PAPA

FOREIGNERS held at the Bureau of Immigration detention center on Tuesday appealed to newly installed Immigration Commissioner Andrea Domingo to investigate former immigration officials for alleged extortion and violation of the human rights of detainees.

The foreigners, detained at the BI detention cell in Bicutan, Taguig, said officials who should be investigated first were former immigration chief Rufus Rodriguez and former intelligence chief Supt. Angelito Tan.

"The new dispensation at the immigration bureau should initiate an investigation into the past activities of Rodriguez, Tan and other immigration officials and agents," said Canadian Raymond Jackson on behalf of other detainees.

Jackson said Domingo should zero in on cases of denial of bail, illegal arrest, illegal detention, bribery and extortion.

The detainees said the investigators should also include certain officials of the National Bureau of Investigation and the Philippine National Police for allegedly conniving with immigration officials.

The detainees also pressed for the filing of appropriate charges against the officials as soon as they are found culpable.

"We believe we have been treated in an inhumane manner," said Romy Ducusin, a native of La Union who migrated to Australia 25 years ago. "We would like some redress for our grievances under Philippine laws."

Jackson said he and the other detainees would also file charges against Rodriguez, Tan and the others.

They said Tan virtually ruled over the immigration bureau and frequently bypassed Rodriguez because Tan was reportedly close to deposed President Estrada.

In the past, foreigners had complained to the ***Inquirer*** that bureau officials constantly harassed them, extorted money from them and violated their rights.

The foreigners said most of them were arrested on "mere suspicion."

"In here, money is the only law," Ducusin said. "You cough up the money, you get released."

In an earlier interview, Rodriguez and Tan denied the charges of extortion and insisted that all the detained foreigners had the proper immigration cases filed against them.

**ATIENZA** confronts suspected traffickers with shabu allegedly seized from them.

JESS YUSON

# Malate trio yields 1 kilo of shabu

WESTERN Police District members on Tuesday night seized a kilo of shabu worth P1 million from a couple and a man in a sting operation in Malate, Manila.

Arrested were Joselito Noque, 47, of San Andres Street, Malate, and his tenants, spouses Ariel and Bansao, 31, and Aida, 30.

Supt. Amador Pabustan, WPD Station 9 commander, said his men were able to set up a drug deal with Noque at about 10 p.m. Tuesday. PO1 Christian Balais of WPD Station 9 posed as a buyer and went to Noque's house 30 minutes later.

Other members of the raiding team, who posted themselves around the house, pounced on Noque as soon as he received P1,000 from Balais for a gram of shabu.

Policemen burst into the house and caught the Bansao couple allegedly sniffing shabu. After a search, they found Noque's cache—a large plastic bag of shabu hidden under a table.

Pabustan said Noque was a big-time drug dealer and was responsible for distributing shabu in Malate. He said Noque might have close links with a drug syndicate based at the Islamic Center in Quiapo, Manila.

"We will not stop until we have driven all of these merchants of death out of the city," Mayor Lito Atienza said when Pabustan presented the suspects to him at City Hall yesterday.

Noque and the Bansaos were detained at the WPD-Integrated Jail.

*Jerome Aning*

# 'Martilyo Gang' strikes at Mandaluyong pawnshop

IT TOOK five heavily armed men just two minutes to take P300,000 in jewelry during a Monday morning pawnshop heist in Mandaluyong City.

Police said the robbers, believed to be former military and police personnel belonging to the so-called "Martilyo Gang," were carrying high-powered firearms when they broke into the BHF Pawnshop and Jewelry Store on General Kalentong Street about 11:45.

The pawnshop stood less than 300 meters away from a Mandaluyong police sub-station under Chief Supt. Godofredo Velasco.

Eastern Police District director Chief Supt. Simeon Dizon was reportedly upset when he learned of the robbery, the first major armed robbery under the newly installed Macapagal administration.

Dizon gave Velasco 48 hours to arrest the suspects.

"(Velasco) has no business staying in his post if he can't solve this robbery," the police chief said.

Velasco was said to be attending a meeting at the police headquarters when the robbery occurred. When he learned of the heist, Velasco reportedly led a team to the crime scene but they were too late.

Witnesses told investigators the armed men appeared out of nowhere and quickly took the 12-gauge shotgun of security guard Manuel Catalan, 33.

Two suspects shattered the pawnshop's glass window display using the butt of their Armalite rifles and scooped the jewelry into a duffel bag, police said.

After two minutes, the group boarded a green Honda Civic (UBC 820) and sped toward San Juan, witnesses said.

Supt. Federico Castro, EPD Intelligence Division chief, said he has been coordinating with the Western and Southern Police Districts to determine if the robbers were the same men behind a string of pawnshop heists in their areas last year.

*Agnes E. Donato*

# Malabon barangay official faces ouster over arrest

A BARANGAY captain is facing dismissal charges before the municipal council for the alleged illegal arrest of a 17-year-old boy last year.

The Commission on Human Rights has ruled that barangay captain Henry Alvarado and village watcher Alexander Alegada illegally arrested the boy last June 1.

But opposition Councilor Edilberto Torres said Alvarado would not likely be dismissed since the municipal council is dominated by administration councilors.

"We can't expect the council to strip Alvarado of his powers since he is backed by Vicencio," Torres told the INQUIRER.

In a resolution, the commission ruled that the 17-year-old's human rights were "gravely violated when he was arrested without a warrant" by Alvarado and Alegada.

The respondents were acting on a complaint by Evelyn Guinab, who claimed that an unidentified man sneaked into her house on June 1 and took some P60,000 worth of personal items.

One Flora Fe Leonardo told authorities the boy might have robbed Guinab since the boy was seen in the vicinity of the victim's house when the robbery supposedly occurred.

Despite having no arrest warrant, Alvarado and Alegada brought the boy to the Santolan Police detachment for questioning. The boy was later detained at the Malabon Municipal jail.

# NBI raids warehouse, stores for carrying fake Nikes

NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation recently raided a big warehouse in Marikina and several retail outlets in other parts of Metro Manila for allegedly dealing in fake Nike products.

Seized from the warehouse in Marikina and seven shops in Greenhills and Cash and Carry in Makati were counterfeit Nike products, mostly sports footwear.

The raiders had search warrants issued by Judge Nemesio S. Felix of Branch 56 of the regional trial court in Makati City following the complaint of the Carag, Caballes, Jamora and Somera law offices, counsel of Nike Philippines.

The warehouse operators were found to have imported, manufactured and sold footwear bearing counterfeit Nike marks.

Satyen Patel, general manager of Nike Southeast Asia, said the incident merely scratches the surface of Nike's battle against product piracy and counterfeiting.

"While the raid marks significant progress in our efforts, we still have a long way to go in curtailing the counterfeiting business," he said in a press statement.

He said consumers are the ones being cheated when they purchase counterfeit footwear, which do not provide the protection, support and cushioning offered by genuine products.

He urged consumers to purchase Nike products only from authorized retailers.

# Managuelod orders arrest of 'jueteng' suspect

BY AGNES E. DONATO

CHIEF Supt. Lucas Managuelod, the Southern Tagalog police chief, yesterday ordered the arrest of a man in Rizal who allegedly has been dropping his name to take over *jueteng* operations in the province.

By using Managuelod's name, Romy Lajara was able to convince the police chiefs of Antipolo City and 13 towns of Rizal to stop the *jueteng* operations of his rivals, a police source said.

A fuming Managuelod said he would not let anybody use his name in illegal businesses.

"I am ordering my men to have him arrested as soon as possible so necessary charges could be filed against him," the Southern Tagalog police chief said.

The gambling lords were forced to stop their operations allegedly because of police harassment, the source said.

The town of Rodriguez was the latest area to be taken over by Lajara, the source said.

In a meeting last Friday, Lajara met with the jueteng bet collectors of Rodriguez, whom the source identified only as Susan, Romy, Ding and Gener.

Lajara advised the four to break away from their former financiers and to join him, claiming he has the blessings of Managuelod.

Lajara reportedly started dropping Managuelod's name after former President Estrada was ousted.

During the Estrada administration, Lajara's operations were said to be "untouchable" because he was enjoying the protection of a relative of a high government official.

MANAGUELOD

# Abalos wants campaign on waste management

BY AGNES E. DONATO

METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority chair Benjamin Abalos yesterday urged private and public school heads to conduct educational campaigns on solid waste management.

Abalos made the call in line with the newly signed Republic Act No. 9003, or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act, which requires the integration of waste management in the school curricula.

But in a dialogue with representatives of Metro Manila private and public schools, Abalos learned that a number of the schools are already into waste segregation and recycling.

He said it was a relief to hear success stories of solid waste management some schools have already conducted.

"But these efforts must be sustained so we do not fall into the '*ningas* cogon' mentality," Abalos said.

The environmental group Metro Manila Linis-Ganda Movement urged immediate action on three major provisions of RA 9003, which was signed by President Macapagal on Jan. 25.

In a paper, Linis-Ganda executive director Leonarda Camacho called for the establishment of the National Commission on Solid Waste Management to "undertake the research and supervision of the agricultural, hospital, household and industrial waste disposal nationwide."

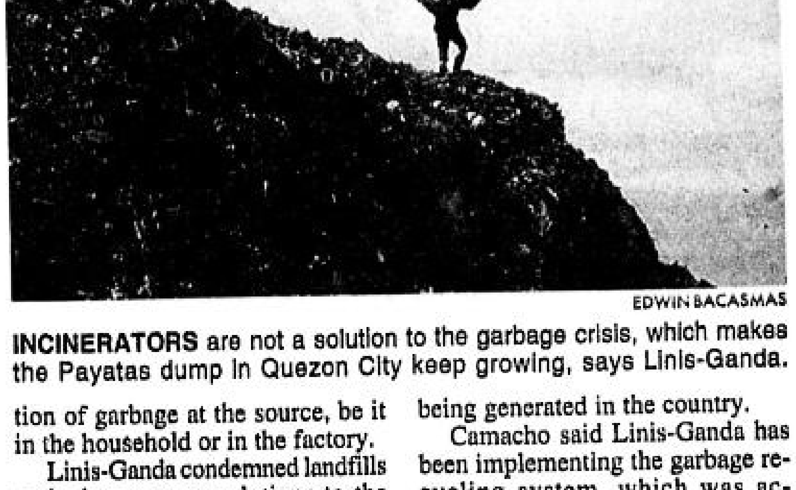
Camacho cited the creation of the National Packaging Institute, which would look for substitutes for non-environment-friendly packaging.

About 70 percent of the garbage being generated in the country are composed of unrecyclable packaging such as doy packs, polystere (or styrofoam) and tetrapacks, among others, Camacho said.

She asked the government to implement the mandatory segregation of garbage at the source, be it in the household or in the factory.

Linis-Ganda condemned landfills or incinerators as solutions to the garbage crisis. She said there are enough practices and technology available to minimize the garbage being generated in the country.

Camacho said Linis-Ganda has been implementing the garbage recycling system, which was acclaimed in 1996 by the United Nations as the best practice in the world for the past 17 years.



EDWIN BACASMAS

**INCINERATORS** are not a solution to the garbage crisis, which makes the Payatas dump in Quezon City keep growing, says Linis-Ganda.

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| 6 | ULTRA SURROUND | SYOTA NG BAYAN |
| 7 | DOLBY SURROUND | REMEMBER THE TITANS |

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| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | ULTRA SURROUND | PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP |
| 2 | ULTRA SURROUND | MEET THE PARENTS |
| 3 | ULTRA SURROUND | BALAHIBONG PUSA |
| 4 | ULTRA SURROUND | SUGATANG PUSO |
| 5 | ULTRA SURROUND | LOST SOULS |
| 6 | ULTRA SURROUND | REMEMBER THETITANS |
| 7 | ULTRA SURROUND | THE 6TH DAY |
| 8 | ULTRA SURROUND | KANGKONG |

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| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | DOLBY DIGITAL EX | VERTICAL LIMIT |
| 2 | DOLBY DIGITAL EX | PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP |
| 3 | DOLBY SURROUND | BOOBA |
| 4 | SYNTHESIZED SURROUND | HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN |
| 5 | SYNTHESIZED SURROUND | SYOTA NG BAYAN |
| 6 | DOLBY SURROUND | TABI TABI PO |

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2 VERTICAL LIMIT — In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3 VERTICAL LIMIT THX — In DSD/SDDS/DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4 SUSAN'S PLAN (Phil. Premiere) — In DTS DIGITAL SOUND — Art Film
5 AMERICAN PSYCHO — In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
6 WHAT WOMEN WANT — In DTS/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
7 DUDE, WHERE'S MY CAR — In DTS DIGITAL SOUND

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2 WHAT WOMEN WANT — In SONY DYNAMIC DIGITAL SOUND
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2 VERTICAL LIMIT. — In DSD DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3 THE YARDS — In DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4 VERTICAL LIMIT — In DTS DIGITAL SOUND
5 SYOTA NG BAYAN — In DTS DIGITAL SOUND

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## MOVIE GUIDE
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2 (SDDS) THE YARD
3 (DTS) TABI TABI PO
4 GOLD (DTS) DUDE
5 GOLD (DOLBY) WHAT WOMEN WANT
6 GOLD (SDDS) CLOSED
7 GOLD (DOLBY) VERTICAL LIMIT
8 HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
9 BOOBA
10 SYOTA NG BAYAN

**Pearl Plaza Cinemas**
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486
1 TABI TABI PO
2 HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
3 (DTS) SYOTA NG BAYAN
4 WHIPPED
5
6 (DTS)
Golden Pearl THX

**Masagana CINEMAX 1-2 & 3**
(Kalaw) tel 536.4315
1 (DOLBY) VERTICAL LIMIT
2 (DTS) RESERVE
3 TABI TABI PO

**Masagana CINEMA**
(Pasay) tel 831.6603
1 SYOTA NG BAYAN
2 TABI TABI PO
3 HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN

**starmall Movies**
(Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4986
1 BOOBA
2 SYOTA NG BAYAN
3 TABI TABI PO
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL) VERTICAL LIMIT
5 HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN

**Metropolis**
(Alabang) tel 543.4001
1 HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
2 SYOTA NG BAYAN
3 TABI TABI PO
4 BALAHIBONG PUSA
5 RESERVE
6 VERTICAL LIMIT
7 BOOBA
8 WHAT WOMEN WANT

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2 AKIN KA NGAYONG GABI
3 PIRANHA 3
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1 BALAHIBONG PUSA
2 MEET THE PARENT

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1 HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
2 TABI TABI PO
3 VERTICAL LIMIT

**Spring**
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1 SYOTA NG BAYAN
A HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN

**JC Cinema**
(Parañaque) tel 825.8626
1 SYOTA NG BAYAN
3 HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN

**GOTESCO CINEMAS**

**City**
(Manila) tel 734.8588
1 (DOLBY) BOOBA
2 BALAHIBONG PUSA
3 HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
4 TABI TABI PO
5 SYOTA NG BAYAN
6 DUDE
7 (DTS) THE YARDS
8 (SDDS) WHAT WOMEN WANT
9 (DOLBY) VERTICAL LIMIT

**Caloocan**
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2 HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
3 TABI TABI PO
4 SYOTA NG BAYAN
5
6

**Grand Central**
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781
1 SYOTA NG BAYAN
2 BOOBA
3 TABI TABI PO
4 (SDDS) WHAT WOMAN WANT
5 SYOTA NG BAYAN
6 (DOLBY) VERTICAL LIMIT
7 (DTS) HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
8 BALAHIBONG PUSA
9 MALIKOT ANG AGOS

**Commonwealth**
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2 TABI TABI PO
3 BALAHIBONG PUSA
4 HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
5 (SDDS) WHAT WOMAN WANT
6 BOOBA
7 (DOLBY) VERTICAL LIMIT
8 MALIKOT ANG AGOS

**Ortigas**
tel 656.6795
1 BALAHIBONG PUSA
2 MALIKOT ANG PUSA
3 (DTS) HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
4 SYOTA NG BAYAN
5 (SDDS) VERTICAL LIMIT
6 (DOLBY) BOOBA
7 (DOLBY) TABI TABI PO

**Universal**
(Manila) tel 733.2470
1 SYOTA NG BAYAN

**Sampaguita**
(Cubao) tel 911.7888
1 SYOTA NG BAYAN

**Dilson**
(Manila) tel 734.7724
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Jennet HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN

**MARKETPLACE** Mandaluyong
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1 SYOTA NG BAYAN
2 TABI TABI PO
3 HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
4 VERTICAL LIMIT

**Prima**
(Pasig) tel 641.1215
1
3 SYOTA NG BAYAN

**Super Cinerama**
(Manila) tel 733.4226 or 733.4238
1 VERTICAL LIMIT
2 TABI TABI PO
3 HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
4 SYOTA NG BAYAN
5 WHAT WOMAN WANT

**Divisoria Mall**
(Manila) tel 244.4560 or 244.4619
1 SYOTA NG BAYAN
2 TABI TABI PO
3 HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
4 MALIKOT ANG AGOS
5 BOOBA
6 VERTICAL LIMIT

**Baclaran LRT Cinema**
tel 512.0115 or 512.0116
1 SYOTA NG BAYAN
2 TABI TABI PO
3 HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN

**CINEMA 2000**

**Cinema 2000 Target Mall**
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198
1 SYOTA NG BAYAN
2 TABI TABI PO
3 (DTS) VERTICAL LIMIT

**Cinema 2000 Waltermart**
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 SYOTA NG BAYAN
2 (DTS) BOOBA
3 (DOLBY) VERTICAL LIMIT
4 TABI TABI PO

**Lianas Cinema**
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 VERTICAL LIMIT
2 HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
3 SYOTA NG BAYAN
4 TABI TABI PO

**Lianas MovieCity**
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) VERTICAL LIMIT
2 SYOTA NG BAYAN
3 (DTS) TABI TABI PO
4 REMEMBER THE TITANS
5 BOOBA

**Olivarez Tri-Cinema**
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883
1 SYOTA NG BAYAN
2 TABI TABI PO
3 VERTICAL LIMIT

**Olivarez Los Baños**
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1 SYOTA NG BAYAN
2 TABI TABI PO
3 VERTICAL LIMIT

**Olivarez Tagaytay**
tel (046) 413.0311
1 BALAHIBONG PUSA
2 BOOBA
3 MALIKOT ANG AGOS

**Morales Cinema**
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736
1
2 LITTLE NICKY
3 VERTICAL LIMIT

**Sunshine**
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376
1 VERTICAL LIMIT
2 SYOTA NG BAYAN
3 BOOBA
4 TABI TABI PO

**Cabuyao**
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2 (DTS) TABI TABI PO

**Fourstep**
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385
1 TABI TABI PO

**Emperor**
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657
1 BOOBA
2 SYOTA NG BAYAN
3 TABI TABI PO

**Fiesta World Mall**
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
2 BOOBA
3 HIGHLANDER
4 REMEMBER THE TITANS

**Berma**
tel 879.2168
1 CLOSED
2 CLOSED

**CitiMall**
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269
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2 HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
3 TABI TABI PO
4 VERTICAL LIMIT

**Jade Cinema**
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3 SYOTA NG BAYAN
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# A demanding role for Mark Wahlberg

FAST-RISING star Mark Wahlberg stars as Leo, an ex-con trying to lead a clean life, but is drawn back to crime in the compelling movie, "The Yards."

Judging by his exceptional performance, it's not obvious that Wahlberg initially felt he wasn't ready for the demanding role.

"At first, I didn't think I was ready for the role, but James Gray (the director) had a very clear idea of what he wanted and thought I could do it," says Wahlberg.

Wahlberg has had acting experiences in both drama ("Boogie Nights") and action ("The Big Hit," "The Perfect Storm") and has been heralded as one of the most promising young stars of his generation.

Starring with him in "The Yards" is Joaquin Phoenix, who has slowly stepped out of his late brother's shadow (River) and came into his own in "Gladiator."

In "The Yards," he plays Willie, Leo's longtime friend and he considers the role a breath of fresh air for him.

"I liked the ambiguity of the characters, that there is not one good guy and one bad guy, which you see in a lot of films," Phoenix says. "All them have a little bit of both. It makes it very interesting because you don't know where the characters are going to go. Throughout the course of the film, you're never quite sure."

Playing the female lead as Willie's girlfriend Erika in "The Yards" is Charlize Theron, who earlier captured everybody's attention by playing Keanu Reeves' wife in "The Devil's Advocate" and the passionate waif in "The Cider House Rules."

Theron wasn't too busy to pass up on a material that had simply blown her away.

"I don't think I've ever read anything quite as intense as The Yards,'" she says "When I read the script for the first time, I knew it was something I wanted to do for many reasons."

"The Yards" is a Sky-Jemah Films release.

WAHLBERG. Exceptional performance.

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❸ WHAT WOMEN WANT
❹ THE YARDS
❺ SYOTA NG BAYAN
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## THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

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|---|---|
| ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1 | SYOTA NG BAYAN |
| ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2 | TABI TABI PO |
| ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS) | WHAT WOMAN WANT |
| ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS) | VERTICAL LIMIT |
| ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS) | THE YARDS |
| ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY) | HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN |
| ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY) | BOOBA |
| FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY) | VERTICAL LIMIT |
| FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY) | SYOTA NG BAYAN |
| FIESTA CARNIVAL | CLOSED FOR RENOVATION |
| NEW FRONTIER | CLOSED FOR RENOVATION |
| **MANILA** | |
| EASTERN | |
| MAXIM | SYOTA NG BAYAN |
| MIRAMAR | LARO SA BAGA / PORNOGRAPHER |
| ODEON | VERTICAL LIMIT |
| ODEON-2 | HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN |
| ROBEN | SYOTA NG BAYAN |
| TANDEM-1 | MALIKOT ANG AGOS |
| TANDEM-2 | WHIPPED |
| TIMES | URBAN LEGEND / BLESS THE CHILD |
| **QUEZON CITY** | |
| ACT-1 | ANAK NG YAKUSA |
| ACT-2 | ANAK NG KANO |
| ACT-3 | ALIPIN NG TUKSO |
| ACT-4 | TURN ON |
| CORONET-2 | SYOTA NG BAYAN |
| QUEZON-1 | TABI TABI PO |
| REMAR | SYOTA NG BAYAN |
| REMAR-2 | HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN |
| **CUBAO** | |
| OCEAN SUPERAMA | SYOTA NG BAYAN |
| OCEAN CINEMA-A | HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN |
| OCEAN CINEMA-B | TABI TABI PO |
| **MANDALUYONG CITY** | |
| SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL | 635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70 |
| CINEMA-1 | THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA |
| CINEMA-2 | VERTICAL LIMIT |
| **CAINTA RIZAL** | |
| STA. LUCIA EAST | (681-54091 TO 19) |
| CINEMA-1 | SYOTA NG BAYAN |
| CINEMA-2 | TABI TABI PO |
| CINEMA-3 | HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN |
| CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL) | WHIPPED |
| CINEMA-5 (DTS) | BALAHIBONG PUSA |
| CINEMA-6 | TANGING YAMAN |
| CINEMA-7 | MALIKOT ANG AGOS |
| CINEMA-8 | BOOBA |
| CINEMA-9 (DTS) | VERTICAL LIMIT |
| CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL) | VERTICAL LIMIT |
| CINEMA-11 (SDDS) | WHAT WOMAN WANT |
| CINEMA-12 | DUDE |
| CINEMA-14 | THE YARDS |
| CINEMA-15 | SYOTA NG BAYAN |
| **LORES** | |
| CINEMA-2 | TABI TABI PO |
| CINEMA-3 | HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN |
| **POWER PLANT CINEMA** | |
| CINEMA-1 | PHANTOM OF THE OPERA |
| CINEMA-2 | WHAT WOMEN WANTS |
| CINEMA-3 | VERTICAL LIMIT |
| CINEMA-4 | THE YARDS |
| CINEMA-5 | WHAT WOMEN WANTS |
| CINEMA-6 | VERTICAL LIMIT |

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Meg Ryan / Russel Crowe
opens Wednesday February 7
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Hear the Difference, Feel the Excitement

# ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

# Three new films and a TV sitcom for Aga

**VIEWFINDER**

*Nestor U. Torre*

THE MOVIE times have really changed. Years ago, if a film star got married, his popularity dipped and offers from producers dried up.

This was because movie fans entertained the silly fantasy that the star was "theirs" for keeps, and if he or she got married, they could no longer fantasize about ending up in their favorite star's loving arms!

Thank goodness, viewers have finally gotten over that self-delusional dream. They now accept the fact that stars play roles and share only their performances with their fans. So, it shouldn't matter if stars are single, married, separated, annulled, etc.!

That's why, when **Cesar Montano** married **Sunshine Cruz,** his movie offers didn't diminish in number.

The latest example is **Aga Muhlach,** who's supposed to marry **Charlene Gonzalez** this May. He's as busy as ever, with some new movies lined up for production (one of them is with Charlene, another is with **Regine Velasquez** a third is with **Maricel Soriano**).

Aside from that, Aga is about to start (on Feb. 10) his new ABS-CBN sitcom with **Joyce Jimenez**. So, he's about as busy as a star can be, despite his impending marriage.

(A final note about that sitcom: Is its title really going to be "The Body and the Guard?" There's still time to think of a breezier title, don't you think?)

### TV treats

FRIDAY, Feb. 2 at 7:15 p.m. on Star Movies, "Summer of the Monkeys"—about a 12-year-old boy who alters his dream and learns valuable lessons about self-sacrifice and love.

Saturday, Feb. 3 at 7 p.m. on the National Geographic Channel, "Soul of Sri Lanka," on the Sri Lankan elephant, an animal on the brink of extermination due to the civil war raging in that country. At 8 p.m., "Giants of Etosha," on elephants that migrate from the safety of a wildlife preserve. At 9 p.m., "Elephants Power," on the majestic elephants of Burma.

On Star Movies: Feb. 3 at 7 a.m., "Revenge of the Nerds 4," with **Robert Carradine, Curtis Armstrong** and **Corinne Bohrer**. At 9 a.m., "Silicon Towers" with **Brian Dennehy** and **Daniel Baldwin**. At 9 p.m., "As Time Runs Out," a psychological thriller starring **Stephen Collins.** At 11 p.m., **Cate Blanchett** in "Elizabeth," with **Geoffrey Rush** and **Joseph Fiennes** (Blanchett won a Golden Globe for her performance in this film).

### 'Lost Words'

THIS MONTH, journey through heretofore forgotten realms in a series of programs titled "Lost Worlds" on the National Goegraphic Channel, Mondays (Feb. 5, 12, 19, 26) at 10 p.m.:

"At the Service of the State" reveals how Hitler and Stalin used archacology for the redefinition of political and geographic boundaries. Also, learn how some Greek divers sacrificed their lives while trying to recover ancient statues.

"The Future of the Past" examines ancient civilizations of elusive nomadic nations. In "Now Archaeology," learn how archaeologists use modern science to redefine methods of interpretation of traditional history.

### 'The Contender'

IT ISN'T being publicized all that extensively, but watch out for "The Contender" when it opens its run in town on Feb. 7. The Political thriller stars **Jeff Bridges, Gary Oldman, Joan Allen, Sam Elliott** and **Christian Slater**.

Its story begins with the sudden death of the US vice president. The president (Bridges) has to appoint a replacement and chooses Sen. **Laine Hanson** (Allen). But the confirmation process is dogged with objections, and her competence and character are put on trial.

Controversy erupts when secret information is unearthed about her involvement in some sexual activities during her college days. When confronted with the report, the senator refuses to answer, even if it means her political career's demise.

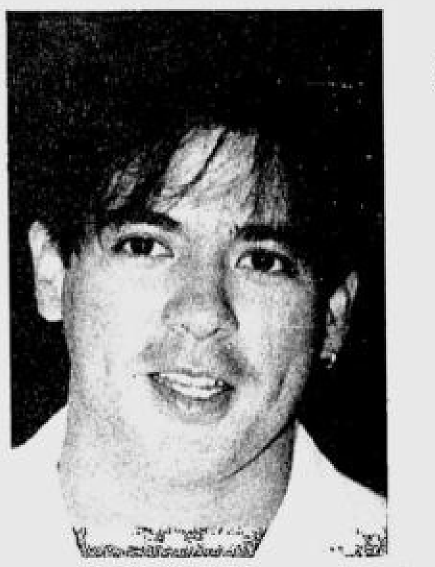
It's interesting that the film is showing here just as Philippine president **Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo** is also in the process of naming her vice president. While the details are different, the similarity in theme gives the movie extra pertinence for local viewers. Script and direction are by **Rod Laurie.**

### Quote, unquote

**HENRY Ward Beecher**: There never was a person who did anything worth doing who did not receive more than he gave.

**Carrie Chapman Catt**: Service to a just cause rewards the worker with more real happiness and satisfaction than any other venture in life.

**Louisa M. Alcott**: The first small sacrifice leads the way to others, and a single hand's turn given heartily to the world's great work helps one amazingly with one's own small tasks.



MUHLACH. As busy as a star can be, despite his impending marriage.

**'SHINDIG BALAHIBO' AT VIRGIN CAFÉ**

Anton, the "Regine Velasquez-alike diva" teams up with Rey Kilay, the "Jaya-alike diva," in a pre-Valentine concert, "Shindig Balahibo," 8 p.m. on Feb. 6 at Virgin Café, Tomas Morato, Quezon City. The duo will sing their own powerful renditions of today's hottest hits. Diminutive belter Dessa guests in the concert, written and directed by Andrew de Real. The show promises to be not just an exhibition of voices, but also a mix of fun, candid jokes and display of wittiness by the two talented hosts of live act performances. For tickets, call 815-1017 or 0917-810-4207.

**'PROOF OF LIFE'**

Meg Ryan exhibits versatility and natural charm in any role she plays which has made her a favorite among audiences around the world. Ranging from comedy to drama, Ryan has appeared in a wide variety of feature films, including "Sleepless in Seattle," "Courage Under Fire," "When a Man Loves a Woman," "City of Angels" and "You've Got Mail." Now, Meg Ryan stars in the gripping romantic-thriller, "Proof of Life," as the wife of an American engineer kidnapped by rebels in Latin America. Also starring David Morse (above) and Russell Crowe, "Proof of Life" is a Warner Bros. film opening Feb. 7 in local theaters.

# Front act for The Corrs

PLUS One, composed of Jason Perry, Nathan Walters, Jeremy Mhire, Gabe Combs and Nate Cole, will surely be remembered in more ways than one by local music fans when they do the front act for The Corrs in the latter's concert, Feb. 16 at the Araneta Coliseum.

While they may be tagged as another boy band, Plus One is definitely more than just your average boy group. For one, they are into helping others, as can be attested by their active involvement in the charity organization Habitat for Humanity, which builds houses for the homeless. And that is aside from the afternoons they have spent as volunteers for a center for the homeless back in the United States.

But the biggest thing about them is their acknowledgement that their immense talent did not come without the help of The One, the "One" in their name Plus One.

Check out the group's debut album, "The Promise," available in CDs and cassettes at local record bars, under Warner Music Philippines.

PLUS One. Not just another boy band.

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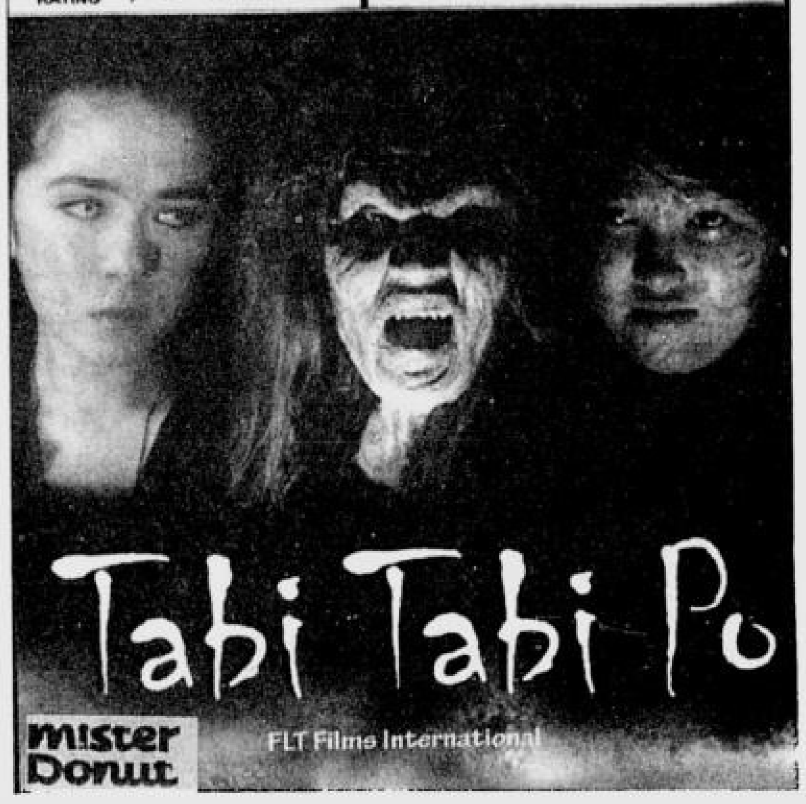

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Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41 DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

| 1 | 2 | 3 |
|---|---|---|
| PHANTOM OF THE OPERA<br>1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30 | WHAT WOMEN WANT<br>12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00 | VERTICAL LIMIT<br>1:15, 3:50, 6:25, 9:00 |
| THE YARDS<br>12:20, 2:45, 5:10, 7:35, 10:00 | WHAT WOMEN WANT<br>11:40, 2:00, 4:20, 6:40, 9:00 | VERTICAL LIMIT<br>11:40, 2:15, 4:50, 7:25, 10:00 |

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Susan's Plan
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SUSAN'S PLAN is about a woman who conspires with her lover to murder her ex-husband for his substantial life insurance policy, but gets tangled in a disastrous and comical web of deceit. Divorced and seeking revenge, Susan recruits her lover, who works at the insurance company, to help her. Two losers, Steve and Bill, owe Sam a big favor although their inexperience at murder soon becomes obvious. This is a quirky, off-beat thriller. "I just wanted to make a small movie," says Landis. In SUSAN'S PLAN, he succeeds most joyfully to make not only a small movie, but an immensely entertaining one as well.
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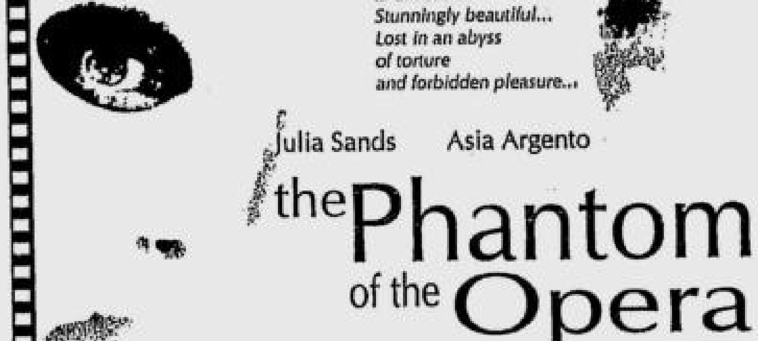

"He" is a monster... "HE" is the personification of the world's mysteries and nightmares...
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BUSINESS

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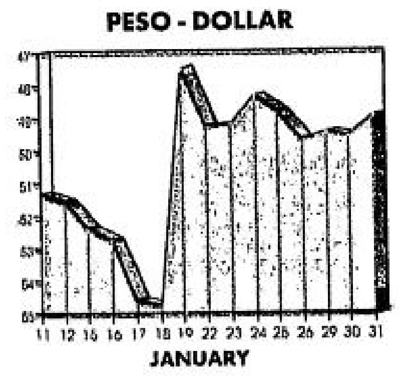
# Big US retailer to invest in RP

## INDICATORS

### CURRENCIES



GRAPHS BY ROBERT B. ANDRES

**Peso-Dollar Rate**

₱48.975 = $1
As of 5 p.m., Jan. 31, 2001

¥116.38 = $1
The US dollar was trading at 116.38 as of 5 p.m., Jan. 31, 2001

GOLD: $266.10/266.60
per ounce Hong Kong, Jan. 31, 2001

BY DORIS C. DUMLAO

FORT Bonifacio Development Corp. has finalized a deal with US-based international retailer Pricesmart Inc. that would pave the way for the opening of its sixth Asian warehouse inside the Fort Bonifacio complex by April this year.

Metro Pacific Corp. president Ricardo Pascua said Pricesmart has started the construction of its first store in the former military base, which is now being developed into a global city by FBDC, the joint venture between MPC-led consortium Bonifacio Land Corp. and state-controlled Bases Conversion and Development Authority.

"I think they're targeting to open by April," Pascua said.

Pricesmart, based in San Diego, California, specializes in membership shopping warehouses and is among the foreign groups keen on the Philippines following the recent liberalization of the local retail sector.

The Philippines will be the third country in Asia where Pricesmart will set foot but the very first where it will directly own and control the store. It currently has five Asian warehouses in operation, four in China and one in Saipan, licensed by the company but owned and operated by local businessmen.

As foreigners are barred by the Constitution from owning land in the Philippines, Pricesmart has leased land from FBDC. Foreigners are allowed to lease land up to 50 years, with the contract renewable for another 25 years.

Manila is among the six locations planned by Pricesmart for opening by the fall of 2001 or the third quarter. Pricesmart, whose shares are listed on the Nasdaq, also announced that it plans to open one store in Guatemala and four in the Caribbean.

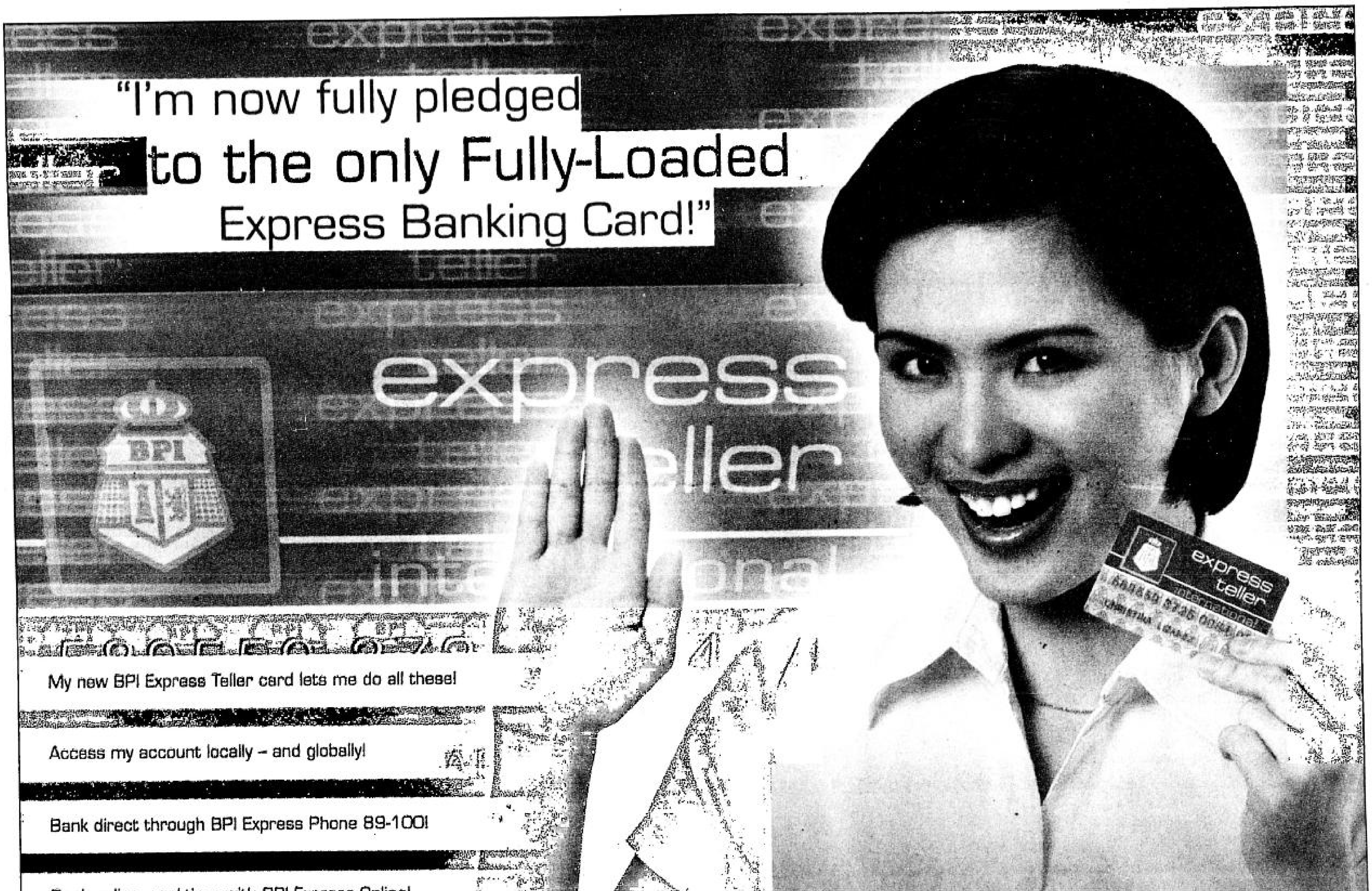
In 1976, American entrepreneurs Sol Price and his son Robert founded Price Club where member-customers could take advantage of pooled buying power to obtain the best possible cost on merchandise. These former principals of Price Club became the significant PriceSmart shareholders. Pricesmart has so far opened five wholesale clubs in the United States alone and started to export its retail enterprise concept to the global markets.

Meanwhile, Pascua also noted that prospects for the property sector, which has been in the doldrums since the Asian financial crisis of 1997, have greatly improved with the ouster of President Estrada.

"It's better now. There have been more visits, more inquiries. But it's still too early to tell. The new administration has been in power only for a few days and we should give her a chance," he said.

Pascua also noted that with the improved confidence level arising from the change in political leadership, MPC was hoping to continue its strategy of divesting its non-core businesses in order to concentrate on its real estate businesses.

For instance, MPC is currently seeking a strategic partner for publicly listed shipping company Negros Navigation Co. (Nenaco), one of its two remaining subsidiaries involved in non-core business, through financial advisor HSBC Corp. The other non-core subsidiary is First e-Bank Corp.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# Vice of the people

**BREAKTIME**

*Conrado R. Banal III*

SURE, the old ways were tough, but they made certain it was the voice of the people that was heard. I am talking about the forgotten days when, at least the last time I checked, this whole nation of 80 million people still elected the president and the vice.

Today, somebody can become president because, one not so fine day, the Supreme Court declares the position vacant. Just like that! It seems that, without anybody asking, the Supreme Court just declared the vacancy on its own.

Look, nobody asked the Supreme Court even just a rhetorical question. Still, out came its famous "vacancy" ruling. How times indeed changed! After a new president hurriedly fills up the vacancy, she then gets to appoint the new vice. On her own, too!

In many neighborhoods, no wonder, the most exciting thing today is, who will be the vice. It is so exciting, people are already betting on it. They are also placing bets in the recycled numbers game called "jueteng." Well, haven't you heard? It's true, it's back!

* * *

ODDMAKERS in the now-showing Lakas-NUCD Party, anyway, are saying that Sen. Teofisto Guingona may have the edge. For one, he is the president of the party. If you talk of qualification, he is also the party president.

In my group, nevertheless, those who place bets on Guingona are relying on some signs that Gloriaetta may have a little paranoia. Her position may be declared vacant again any time soon, say, when the vice does what she just did. She may not want to be upstaged. Guingona should be her hands-down choice.

The other bets are premised on need and not politics. Maybe Gloriaetta will decide that she needs all the help she can get. If that is so, according to the oddmakers, it's a toss-up between Sen. Franklin Drilon and Senate President Aquilino Pimentel.

As for me, I'm sure that Pimentel has no vested interest—definitely not in big business. I know that he stays in an old house in Marikina, which is so opulent and decadent, it gets flooded if a dwarf urinates nearby. Still, you can be sure it's all up to Gloriaetta. Does she want a vice of the people or not?

* * *

IN THE shortlist of Gloriaetta for secretary of environment and natural resources, I heard, is Rep. Miguel Zubiri. He is one of the "Spice Boys" in the House of Representatives. They did hard labor in the impeachment of the man named Band . . . Wrist Band.

Among the NGOs, which are technically "nongovernment organizations," although they want to get involved in governance, Zubiri is said to be favored. He is what the NGOs would like to call "fresh blood." This is just a nice way of saying that somebody is not a despicable "trapo."

The young Zubiri is a known environmentalist. He authored the law that establishes the Solid Waste Management Program. Gloriaetta signed it just last week. Among others, it seeks to involve people in waste management to the barangay level.

Another Gloriaetta ally in the shortlist, I heard, is none other than Rep. Heherson Alvarez. He is said to be backed by . . . well, "trapos." Our idol "Hehe" also headed the Department of Environment and Natural Resources under Tita Cory, until he decided he wanted to become a senator. And at that time did he stop illegal logging?

* * *

FORMER House Speaker Jose de Venecia has spoken. *Yehey, kami na naman!* No, actually, that's not what he said at all. Actually, what he said is, no more turncoatism. Alright, boss, if you say so.

Those of you who, at one time or another, were members of Yoda Venecia's so-called "rainbow coalition," please return to your former political parties right away! Speak Yoda did. Well, again and again and again, without being asked.

By the way, lobbying hard for the position of energy secretary is another one from the *yehey-kami-na-naman* camp. Business is nervous. This is the same guy who was said to be a master of the build-operate-transfer scheme. Yes, the BOT.

That's the no-bidding way toward a contract with the government. For instance, Mr. Lobbyist awarded a BOT to somebody in big business for a 100-megawatt diesel power plant in Mindanao, although the demand was estimated at only 17 megawatts.

Whether or not the government uses up 100 megawatts, in other words, the taxpayers must pay for the entire contract. As a result, the government lost more than P400 million in only six months! *Utang na . . . sila na naman!*

* * *

CALL it turncoatism or call it enlightenment, a large business conglomerate just threw a party for all its companies, calling it a "thanksgiving party." The group was probably thankful for the ouster of the man named Band . . . Wrist Band.

Its main man was perceived in big business as a close friend of Wrist Band. He was even tagged as a "crony." As such, he supposedly got favors from the Wrist Band administration. In theory, he could enrich himself like the runaway Jaime Dichaves.

The thing is, according to executives in the conglomerate, the big boss was being pestered by the women of Wrist Band. They were always selling him jewelry or supplies or contracts. And the man could not complain to Wrist Band.

At one time, according to the story, the son of the big boss was even castigated by a mistress of Wrist Band in public. It seems that the son had to kneel down in front of her to ask for forgiveness. The group really had a lot to thank for these days.

### BOARDROOM SHAKE-UP

# Cojuangco risks losing San Miguel post

GUZZLING the popular San Miguel beer, many Filipinos toasted the downfall last week of scandal-tainted President Estrada.

But news of Estrada's ouster was seemingly no cheer to food and beverage giant San Miguel Corp.'s chair, Eduardo Cojuangco, an alleged crony of the deposed leader.

The 65-year-old Cojuangco risks being replaced in a boardroom shake-up by the government of newly installed President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, which has rights to 47-percent shares of the century-old company.

Cojuangco only owns 20-percent equity in San Miguel, the largest manufacturing company in the country in terms of sales and profits.

"Unless Mr. Cojuangco reaches an agreement with the new administration or gets more shares, he may be booted out in the coming stockholders' meeting in April," Raymond Franco, assistant manager of research at Abacus Securities, told AFP.

But Franco warned that any move by the government to remove Cojuangco, who has been credited with turning the firm into a lean, mean profit-making machine, could dampen investor sentiment.

"Investor sentiment will be negatively affected and company share prices may under-perform," he said.

This is not the first brush with the authorities for Cojuangco, a low-key yet influential adviser to Estrada who was toppled in a bloodless military-backed uprising.

His previous stint as company chair was cut short by a near-similar revolt in 1986 that toppled his benefactor, former President Ferdinand Marcos.

When Marcos fled the country, his successor Corazon Aquino seized Cojuangco's 47-percent stake in San Miguel for the government and handed control of the firm to its founder's grandson, Andres Soriano III.

Cojuangco was accused of buying his stake using money allegedly from banks that harbored funds from a special tax imposed by dictator Marcos on coconut farmers.

When Estrada entered office in 1998, Cojuangco was reinstated company chair and immediately went on a campaign to resurrect his reputation.

COJUANGCO

This gave rise to suspicion that the mercurial San Miguel top honcho was backed by Estrada whom he supported in the presidential polls.

One of Cojuangco's first victories was a Supreme Court ruling allowing him voting rights over 20 percent of the government-sequestered stake.

Just before his ouster, Estrada signed presidential decrees approving a compromise deal on the remaining 27 percent sequestered San Miguel shares.

The compromise would effectively lift the sequestration of the shares and allow the government to sell the bloc to set up a trust fund and development program for coconut farmers.

The deal was seen as favoring Cojuangco.

Alberto Romulo, the finance secretary in the new government, however recommended to President Macapagal that Estrada's so-called executive order be repealed.

"I believe that such an agreement is immoral; not to speak of its being illegal," he said.

In addition to the 47-percent sequestered shares, the government holds 12 percent of San Miguel shares through two state institutions.

"This share ownership issue has been hanging like the sword of Damocles over the company for the last 15 years and it is about time this is resolved," said Gonzalo Bongolan, research head of PCCI Securities Brokers Corp.

He said Cojuangco might resist, through the investing public, attempts by the government to take away the "crown jewel" of his empire.

"It is going to be an exciting battle," Bongolan said.

Analyst Franco said Cojuangco lacked the financial capacity to buy up additional stakes in the company and take on the government "but he may put up a fight through proxies—minority shareholders and ordinary investors."

Analysts said Cojuangco was credited for boosting San Miguel's profits and expanding its cash reserves.

The company is reputedly among the top 20 in Asia in terms of fat profits, highest return on assets and highest growth in profits.

It also sits on a mountain of cash—one billion dollars—garnered during a series of large divestments by Cojuangco.

Analysts forecast that despite a difficult year, San Miguel's net profit would be as high as P7 billion for 2000 compared with P6.02 billion in 1999.

"Even though Mr. Cojuangco is a close friend of former President Estrada, he has been able to run the company very well. This is a generally accepted observation in the market.

"Unless the government appoints or assigns voting rights to someone as astute in running the business as him, I think the sentiment for the stock will be altered negatively," Franco said.

*AFP*

# Shares close higher on bargain hunting

STOCKS closed higher yesterday on bargain-hunting, fueled by expectation the US Federal Open Market Committee will substantially cut key interest rates, traders said.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index ended up 18.57 points, or 1.1 percent, at 1,687.00, following Tuesday's 1.1-percent loss. The index fell 2.3 percent in the past two sessions.

Blue chip Ayala Land was among the most active stocks, up 10 centavos at P6.80, on expectation interest rates will continue to soften. Lower cost of lending traditionally improves property demand.

"The market managed to break its two-day slump on bargain-hunting and expectation that the Fed will aggressively cut US interest rates," said Wise Securities economist Jose Vistan.

The Fed is widely expected to reduce key US interest rates when it meets later Wednesday by 0.50 percentage point—a move that is expected to benefit financial markets worldwide.

Lower interest rates help bring down corporate borrowing costs and move funds from fixed-income instruments to other types of investments like equities.

Traders said investors continue to look forward to better economic prospects following the bloodless, military-backed revolt that ousted President Joseph Estrada and installed Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo as the country's new leader.

Total volume of shares traded yesterday reached 1.38 billion shares valued at P1.04 billion from 1.89 billion shares valued at P728.3 million on Tuesday.

Gainers led decliners 59 to 31, while 42 issues were unchanged.

*AP*

## DISCLOSURES

**PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co.** will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 8, 4 p.m., at the Grand Ballroom, Dusit Hotel Nikko, Ayala Center, Makati.

* * *

**PHILCOMSAT Holdings Corp.** furnished the exchange a copy of its amended SEC form 11-Q for the period ended Sept. 30, 2000. It is available for reference at the PSE Plaza and PSE Center Libraries.

* * *

YIU Kin Wai resigned as director of **Acesite Hotel Corp.** to devote more of his time to other business concerns. Vincent Chiu Kwok Shing was elected to replace him.

* * *

**URBANCORP Realty Developers Inc.** said they are unaware of any material information that affected the value and trading of its shares on Jan. 25 from P0.31 to P0.46.

* * *

**PCI Leasing and Finance Inc.** will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 19, 9:30 a.m., at the Francisco Santiago Hall, Mezzanine Floor, Equitable PCI Bank Tower 1, Makati.

* * *

**BENGUET Corp.** elected Benjamin Philip Romualdez as chairman of the board and CEO, Salvador Pabalan as SVP for finance and treasurer, and Marcelo Bolaño as SVP for operations. ***Compiled by Armin P. Adina, PDI Research***

## Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Wednesday, January 31, 2001)

| STOCKS | OPEN | HIGH | LOW | CLOSE | VOLUME |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES** | | | | | |
| **BANKS** | | | | | |
| Bank of the Phil. Islands | 71.00 | 71.5 | 71 | 71.5 | 110,100 |
| China Banking Corp. | 750.0 | 750 | 750 | 750 | 50 |
| Equitable PCI Bank Inc. | 56.50 | 57.5 | 56.5 | 57.5 | 107,900 |
| Metropolitan Bank & Trust | 235.0 | 238 | 232 | 238 | 113,610 |
| Philippine National Bank | 31.50 | 32.5 | 31.5 | 32.5 | 509,200 |
| Rizal Comm'l Bkg Corp "A" | 27.00 | 27 | 27 | 27 | 500,000 |
| Union Bank of the Phil. | 32.00 | 32 | 32 | 32 | 1,300 |
| **FINANCIAL SERVICE** | | | | | |
| Bankard Inc. | 1.66 | 1.66 | 1.66 | 1.66 | 200,000 |
| Filipino Fund Inc. | .3900 | .39 | .39 | .39 | 50,000 |
| Manulife Financial Corp. | 1300 | 1310 | 1300 | 1310 | 2,070 |
| Sun Life Financial Serv. | 1115 | 1115 | 1080 | 1090 | 17,730 |
| **COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL** | | | | | |
| **COMMUNICATION** | | | | | |
| ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. | 48.50 | 48.5 | 47.5 | 48 | 129,100 |
| Digital Telecom Phils. Inc. | .6400 | .65 | .63 | .64 | 1,960,000 |
| Globe Telecom Inc. | 700.0 | 740 | 700 | 725 | 2,380 |
| Island Info and Tech Inc. | .0700 | .07 | .07 | .07 | 5,000,000 |
| Liberty Telecoms Holdings | .4500 | .45 | .45 | .45 | 40,000 |
| Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp. | 3.95 | 3.95 | 3.9 | 3.9 | 110,000 |
| Piltel | .7000 | .7 | .7 | .7 | 70,000 |
| Phil. Long Dis Tel Co. | 915.0 | 915 | 910 | 915 | 81,200 |
| Ivantage Corp. | 1.08 | 1.08 | 1.02 | 1.04 | 680,000 |
| Philweb.com Inc. | .0850 | .09 | .0825 | .0875 | 590,700,000 |
| **POWER & ENERGY** | | | | | |
| Manila Electric Co. "A" | 55.00 | 55 | 54 | 54.5 | 32,200 |
| Manila Electric Co. "B" | 56.50 | 59 | 56.5 | 59 | 1,357,700 |
| Petron Corp. | 1.86 | 2 | 1.86 | 1.9 | 15,937,000 |
| **TRANSPORTATION SERVICES** | | | | | |
| Asian Terminals Inc. | 1.16 | 1.16 | 1.16 | 1.16 | 1,000 |
| Int'l Container Term'l SV | 1.24 | 1.52 | 1.24 | 1.46 | 53,551,000 |
| Keppel Phils. Marine Inc. | .4900 | .58 | .49 | .58 | 180,000 |
| Lorenzo Shipping Corp. | .4000 | .4 | .4 | .4 | 50,000 |
| **CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS** | | | | | |
| Alsons Cement Corp. | .2500 | .25 | .25 | .25 | 80,000 |
| Engineering Equip. Inc. | .5700 | .58 | .56 | .57 | 2,230,000 |
| Republic Glass Hldg. Corp. | .8100 | .81 | .81 | .81 | 170,000 |
| Union Cement Corp. | .7200 | .73 | .72 | .73 | 9,440,000 |
| **FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO** | | | | | |
| Cosmos Bottling Corp. | 2.70 | 2.75 | 2.7 | 2.75 | 14,154,000 |
| Jollibee Foods Corp. | 11.50 | 11.5 | 11.25 | 11.5 | 748,500 |
| La Tondeña Distillers Inc. | 34.00 | 36.5 | 34 | 36 | 169,300 |
| Pancake House Inc. | 1.58 | 1.62 | 1.56 | 1.62 | 100,000 |
| RFM Corp. | 1.00 | 1.08 | 1 | 1.08 | 19,350,000 |
| San Miguel Corp. "A" | 50.00 | 50 | 49.5 | 50 | 33,500 |
| San Miguel Corp. "B" | 62.00 | 62.5 | 62 | 62.5 | 845,000 |
| Universal Robina Corp. | 5.70 | 6 | 5.7 | 6 | 619,000 |
| Vitarich Corp. | .4700 | .51 | .47 | .51 | 380,000 |
| Abacus Con Res & Hdg "A" | .6000 | .6 | .58 | .58 | 70,000 |
| Ayala Corp. | 8.20 | 8.3 | 8.2 | 8.3 | 2,411,000 |
| Aboitiz Equity Ventures | 1.52 | 1.54 | 1.52 | 1.54 | 2,599,000 |
| Alliance Global Group Inc. | 12.25 | 12.25 | 11.75 | 12.25 | 3,900 |
| Ajo.Net Holdings Inc. | 1.10 | 1.16 | 1.1 | 1.14 | 753,000 |
| A. Soriano Corp. | .3100 | .33 | .31 | .31 | 940,000 |
| APC Group Inc. | .2300 | .23 | .23 | .23 | 210,000 |
| Alcorn Gold Res. Corp. | .0060 | .006 | .006 | .006 | 10,000,000 |
| Bacnotan Cons. Indus. Inc. | 12.00 | 12.25 | 12 | 12.25 | 5,300 |
| Benpres Holdings Corp. | 3.00 | 3.1 | 3 | 3.1 | 1,701,000 |
| Basic Consolidated Inc. | .1900 | .19 | .18 | .18 | 650,000 |
| Crown Equities Inc. | .2500 | .27 | .25 | .27 | 660,000 |
| Southeast Asian Cement | .2500 | .25 | .25 | .25 | 100,000 |
| DMCI Holdings Inc. | .6100 | .64 | .61 | .64 | 3,770,000 |
| Ebecom Holdings Inc. | .1750 | .175 | .17 | .175 | 2,330,000 |
| Fil-Estate Corp. | 1.80 | 1.8 | 1.8 | 1.8 | 5,000 |
| Filinvest Dev. Corp. | 1.28 | 1.36 | 1.28 | 1.3 | 6,765,000 |
| Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp. | 2.10 | 2.9 | 2.1 | 2.9 | 4,000 |
| First Phil. Hldgs. Corp. | 24.00 | 24.5 | 23.75 | 23.75 | 286,900 |
| Global Equities Inc. | .3600 | .4 | .36 | .38 | 1,590,000 |
| Ionics Inc. | 15.25 | 15.5 | 15.25 | 15.5 | 2,219,800 |
| J.G. Summit Holdings Inc. | 2.65 | 2.65 | 2.6 | 2.6 | 2,775,000 |
| Marsteel Cons. Inc. "A" | .0210 | .022 | .018 | .018 | 2,500,000 |
| Megaworld Corp. | .9600 | 1.02 | .96 | .99 | 21,050,000 |
| Magnum Holdings Inc. | 2.50 | 2.5 | 2.5 | 2.5 | 50,000 |
| Multitech Inv. Corp. | .5300 | .53 | .52 | .53 | 2,210,000 |
| Metro Pacific Corp. | .6700 | .68 | .66 | .66 | 3,880,000 |
| Solid Group Inc. | .7200 | .8 | .72 | .74 | 1,420,000 |
| Uniwide Holdings Inc. | .4200 | .43 | .42 | .42 | 5,230,000 |
| Wellex Industries Inc. | .4600 | .46 | .46 | .46 | 510,000 |
| Waterfront Phils. Inc. | .4000 | .41 | .38 | .39 | 2,620,000 |
| Zeus Holdings Inc. | .4300 | .43 | .43 | .43 | 20,000 |
| **MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING** | | | | | |
| A Brown Company Inc. | .7500 | .75 | .74 | .75 | 170,000 |
| Corro-Coat Inc. | 1.42 | 1.44 | 1.4 | 1.44 | 25,000 |
| Macondray Plastics Inc. | 6.40 | 6.4 | 6.4 | 6.4 | 2,000 |
| Music Corp. | 3.25 | 3.25 | 3.2 | 3.25 | 31,000 |
| Picop Resources Inc. | .1500 | .15 | .15 | .15 | 510,000 |
| Pryce Corp. | .6000 | .6 | .6 | .6 | 320,000 |
| Central Azucar Don Pedro | .9500 | .95 | .95 | .95 | 60,000 |
| SPI Technologies Inc. | 11.50 | 11.5 | 10.75 | 11.25 | 391,800 |
| **HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE** | | | | | |
| Belle Corp. | .7400 | .75 | .72 | .73 | 3,540,000 |
| Fairmont Holdings Inc. | .7200 | .79 | .71 | .76 | 10,320,000 |
| Leisure & Resorts Corp. | .6100 | .64 | .61 | .63 | 2,580,000 |
| Manila Jockey Club | 15.00 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15,000 |
| Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc. | .3800 | .38 | .38 | .38 | 100,000 |
| **BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS** | | | | | |
| ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (PDR) | 48.50 | 48.5 | 48 | 48.5 | 1,062,100 |
| Equitable PCI Bank-War | 3.50 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 76,000 |
| Globe Telecom Hldg. (PDR) | 770.0 | 770 | 770 | 770 | 9,650 |
| Jollibee Warrants | 11.00 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 150,000 |
| Omico Corp. Warrant | .0036 | .0038 | .0034 | .0034 | 155,000,000 |
| PLDT (10% Pref) Series Q | 10.25 | 10.25 | 10.25 | 10.25 | 100 |
| PLDT (10% Pref) Series R | 10.50 | 10.5 | 10.5 | 10.5 | 500 |
| PLDT (10% Pref) Series S | 10.50 | 10.5 | 10.5 | 10.5 | 500 |
| Waterfront Phils.-Warrant | .1100 | .11 | .11 | .11 | 500,000 |
| Centro Escolar University | 6.50 | 9.8 | 6.5 | 9.8 | 301,000 |
| **PROPERTY** | | | | | |
| Ayala Land Inc. | 6.80 | 6.9 | 6.7 | 6.8 | 19,580,000 |
| Araneta Properties Inc. | .4000 | .4 | .39 | .39 | 300,000 |
| Cebu Holdings Inc. | .4100 | .41 | .4 | .4 | 1,000,000 |
| C & P Homes Inc. | .3600 | .37 | .36 | .37 | 13,050,000 |
| Cyber Bay Corp. | .5100 | .51 | .51 | .51 | 200,000 |
| Empire East Land Inc. | .4800 | .49 | .47 | .48 | 4,610,000 |
| Filinvest Land Inc. | 2.70 | 2.85 | 2.65 | 2.7 | 19,488,000 |
| Gotesco Land Inc. "B" | .0525 | .0525 | .0525 | .0525 | 500,000 |
| Kuok Phil. Properties | .2000 | .21 | .2 | .2 | 940,000 |
| Fil-Estate Land Inc. | .4800 | .49 | .47 | .48 | 990,000 |
| MRC Allied Ind. Inc. | .4500 | .45 | .44 | .44 | 40,000 |
| Robinsons Land Corp. | 2.16 | 2.16 | 2.1 | 2.1 | 410,000 |
| Phil. Realty and Holdings | .1800 | .18 | .18 | .18 | 310,000 |
| SM Prime Holdings Inc. | 6.80 | 7 | 6.7 | 7 | 11,322,000 |
| Universal Rightfield Prop. | .1350 | .135 | .13 | .13 | 2,840,000 |
| Urbancorp Realty Dev. Inc. | .4100 | .41 | .41 | .41 | 20,000 |
| **MINING** | | | | | |
| Apex Mining Co. Inc. "A" | .0075 | .0075 | .0075 | .0075 | 23,000,000 |
| Apex Mining Co. Inc. "B" | .0080 | .008 | .0075 | .0075 | 26,000,000 |
| Abra Mining & Industrial | .0060 | .006 | .006 | .006 | 5,000,000 |
| Atlas Cons. Min. & Dev't. | 1.50 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 10,000 |
| Dizon Copper Silver Mines | 4.50 | 6.3 | 4.5 | 6.2 | 170,000 |
| Itogon-Suyoc Mines "A" | .0210 | .021 | .021 | .021 | 2,000,000 |
| Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. "A" | .2000 | .22 | .2 | .22 | 680,000 |
| Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. "B" | .2050 | .205 | .205 | .205 | 60,000 |
| Manila Mining Corp. "A" | .0070 | .007 | .0065 | .0065 | 2,000,000 |
| Manila Mining Corp. "B" | .0070 | .007 | .007 | .007 | 10,000,000 |
| Omico Corp. | .0050 | .005 | .005 | .005 | 206,000,000 |
| Polar Mines & Dev't. Corp. | .0210 | .021 | .02 | .02 | 10,000,000 |
| Philex Mining Corp. "A" | .2400 | .24 | .24 | .24 | 1,460,000 |
| Philex Mining Corp. "B" | .2400 | .245 | .225 | .24 | 1,320,000 |
| United Paragon Mining Co. | .2000 | .2 | .2 | .2 | 100,000 |
| **OIL** | | | | | |
| Imperial Res. | .0320 | .033 | .032 | .032 | 12,800,000 |
| Oriental Pet. & Min. "A" | .0060 | .006 | .006 | .006 | 5,000,000 |
| Pacifica | .0210 | .021 | .019 | .02 | 20,800,000 |
| Sinophil Corp. | .1100 | .11 | .105 | .105 | 2,840,000 |
| Vulcan Ind'l. | .2900 | .29 | .29 | .29 | 50,000 |

## CURRENCIES

| Jan. 31, 2001<br>Country | Unit | Euro Equivalent | Foreign currency in US$ | Foreign currency in Peso |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| United States | Dollar | 1.078865 | 1.000000 | 49.4120 |
| Japan | Yen | 0.009311 | 0.008630 | 0.4264 |
| United Kingdom | Pound | 1.578595 | 1.463200 | 72.2996 |
| Hong Kong | Dollar | 0.138329 | 0.128217 | 6.3355 |
| Switzerland | Franc | 0.655446 | 0.607533 | 30.0194 |
| Canada | Dollar | 0.718190 | 0.665690 | 32.8931 |
| Singapore | Dollar | 0.618615 | 0.573394 | 28.3325 |
| Australia | Dollar | 0.589286 | 0.546209 | 26.9893 |
| Bahrain | Dinar | 2.861863 | 2.652661 | 131.0733 |
| Kuwait | Dinar | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Saudi Arabia | Rial | 0.287674 | 0.266645 | 13.1755 |
| Brunei | Dollar | 0.615966 | 0.570939 | 28.2112 |
| Indonesia | Rupiah | 0.000114 | 0.000106 | 0.0052 |
| Thailand | Baht | 0.025284 | 0.023436 | 1.1580 |
| UAE | Dirham | 0.293761 | 0.272287 | 13.4542 |
| Korea | Won | 0.000853 | 0.000791 | 0.0391 |
| Euro | Euro | 1.000000 | 0.926900 | 45.8000 |
| Germany | Mark | 0.511291 | 0.473916 | 23.4171 |
| France | Franc | 0.152450 | 0.141305 | 6.9822 |
| Netherlands | Guilder | 0.453780 | 0.420609 | 20.7831 |
| Austria | Schilling | 0.072672 | 0.067360 | 3.3284 |
| Belgium | Franc | 0.024789 | 0.022977 | 1.1353 |
| Italy | Lire | 0.000517 | 0.000479 | 0.0237 |
| Finland | Markka | 0.168188 | 0.155893 | 7.7030 |
| Portugal | Escudo | 0.004988 | 0.004623 | 0.2284 |
| Spain | Peseta | 0.006010 | 0.005571 | 0.2753 |
| Luxemburg | Franc | 0.024789 | 0.022977 | 1.1353 |
| Ireland | Punt | 1.269738 | 1.17692 | 58.1540 |

# MOTORING

CESAR D. MANGAWANG, Editor

## AUTOMAKERS' WOES

# Used car auctions in Subic go on

BY TESSA R. SALAZAR

CONTRARY to earlier reports that auctions of secondhand imported vehicles in Subic had been stopped after Malacañang issued a hold order last month, the bidding in Subic continues.

A call by the INQUIRER to Asia International Auctioneers Inc. (AIA), an auction center in Subic, and a highly placed source confirmed this. However, another source stressed that auction center JMVC Holdings Corp. was not resuming its operations.

The AIA said its originally scheduled bidding in February had been rescheduled to March, but gave no exact date yet. It said patrons should expect print advertisements of its offerings by the second week of February. Expected to be auctioned off are imported secondhand pickups, vans, 4x4s and jeepneys.

Just last week, Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority legal counsel Arleen Pangan confirmed to the source that the auctions could continue—minus the publicity and advertisements. The source said the auctioneers had already identified the bidders and that notices would just be sent to these bidders.

### No written instruction

Pangan confirmed—through the source—that no written instruction from Malacañang was issued to stop the auctions. Data obtained by the INQUIRER showed that from January to November 2000, the auction industry in the Subic Bay Freeport Zone—composed of the AIA, Subic Auctioneers Inc and JMVC Holdings Inc.—earned a total of P2.4 billion. Customs and duties paid amounted to roughly P270 million while port charges cost them P9.5 million. Total monthly rent paid by auctioneers was US$768,257.

The source disclosed, however, that the contributions of these auctioneers to the government were "nothing" compared to the economic benefits the automotive assemblers gave. "In terms of taxes and duties paid by, let's say the top auto assemblers alone such as Toyota, Honda, Mitsubishi, Nissan and Isuzu, the government's earnings on auctioneers are very miniscule," the source quipped.

"If you recall, Honda was even awarded a special plaque in Malacañang for being one of the 10 biggest tax payers in excise tax collections alone. If you consider there are 20 companies that are in the formal industry registered with the government through the BOI's Motor Vehicle Development Program. The economic contribution of Subic auctioneers is nothing," added the source.

### Cancellation sought

The auto industry previously asked the government to cancel all auctions in Subic and conduct an investigation. The auctions, however, are seen to continue despite previous reports that then Finance Secretary Jose T. Pardo, in his capacity as then vice chair of the Economic Mobilization Group-Special Action Team (EMG-SAT), was instructed by then President Joseph Estrada to stop and investigate the allegedly anomalous auctions. The EMG-SAT was formed to combat "technical smuggling" that results in uncollected taxes and duties. Chaired by the Department of Finance, its secretariat is assigned to the Department of Trade and Industry.

The auto manufacturers are now blaming the lack of formal, written instructions from Malacañang for the continuing auctions in Subic.

### Violations

A report of the violations believed to have been committed by the Subic auctioneers were given to the Department of Justice by the DTI for review. The alleged violations were:

- Selling of right-hand drive vehicles. A violation of Republic Act 8506 banning the registration and operation of vehicles with right-hand steering wheel in any private or public street, road or highway.
- Allowing an SBMA locator to import used motor vehicles despite Philippine laws and regulations on the importation of used motor vehicles. By law, only brand-new, completely built-up units are allowed to be imported to support the development of a viable local auto parts manufacturing industry.
- Suspicion of noncompliance with the Consumer Act of the Philippines that includes safety standards, consumer product quality, seatbelt use and emission standards.

"As far as we know, these auctions were already settled in Congress, and we don't see any violations as all countries have vehicle auctions. We even have buyers who come all the way from Japan, Vietnam and Singapore," said an AIA staff member.

# Why the Skyway is not always faster

ON THE ROAD

*Aida Sevilla-Mendoza*

MOTORISTS heading for Manila from points south last Saturday afternoon discovered to their horror that the Skyway is not always faster.

What normally takes about 12 minutes to drive through took all of 55 minutes because for some reason best known to themselves, personnel of the Citra Metro Manila Tollways Corp., operator of the South and North Luzon Expressways and Manila Skyway, closed all the tollgate exit lanes except one. Even the dedicated E-Pass exit lane was closed.

The chaos on the Skyway last Saturday reflected gross inefficiency on the part of Citra and its dismal inability to solve the traffic jams at the toll plazas. To phrase it positively, Citra last Saturday displayed its ability to create traffic jams at the toll plazas. The lines of cars queuing at the tollgates of the Skyway as well as the South Luzon Expressway (SLEX) are getting longer instead of shorter mainly because Citra has adopted the policy of closing off one lane for the exclusive use of E-Pass subscribers.

Motorists and commuters who use the SLEX regularly have noticed lately that the northbound exit ramp to C-5 is now almost always jammed bumper to bumper with traffic because one of the two lanes has been converted to a dedicated E-Pass lane. Prior to this, traffic flowed more freely on the C-5 ramp.

The same thing happened at the southbound Sucat exit. Ever since the leftmost lane became a dedicated E-Pass lane, traffic slowed down to a crawl even though the Sucat exit ramp has more than two lanes. As for the Filinvest Alabang exit, it is now famous for breaking the record for the length of time it takes to reach the toll booth, thanks to Citra's closure of one of the two exit lanes in favor of E-Pass subscribers.

In an e-mail to this columnist after I wrote about the E-Pass ("Why the E-Pass is a failure," Nov. 30, 2000), Citra marketing manager Olive F. Martinez claimed that "since we opened those dedicated lanes at Filinvest, our numbers for E-Pass traffic increased by 88 percent."

Perhaps someone should point out to Ms Martinez that the company she works for did not really open dedicated lanes at Filinvest. What Citra really did was close several existing lanes to the general motoring public so that only E-Pass subscribers could use them. If Citra had the common sense to build additional lanes as dedicated E-Pass lanes instead of grabbing existing lanes from the toll-paying public, traffic flow would have been enhanced instead of being delayed even more. And less people would have been antagonized.

As for the 88 percent increase in E-Pass traffic alleged by Citra—hello?! To see is to believe. While lining up to pay at any toll plaza, a motorist can usually count on the fingers of one hand the number of cars zipping through the dedicated E-Pass lane. In fact, the E-Pass lane is almost always so empty that the traditional Chinese New Year's dragon dance can be performed there without obstructing traffic.

Citra is depriving the motoring public of exit lanes and thereby aggravates the traffic problem in a desperate effort to coerce motorists to subscribe to its overpriced E-Pass. As Citra's Ms Martinez stated in her e-mail, "Regarding the dedicated lanes, we took into consideration the risks. . .But I hope you also realize that without the dedicated E-Pass lanes, the migration of cash users to E-Pass will be very slow."

Dedicated E-Pass lanes are fine, as long as you don't take exit lanes away from the majority in order to give them to the few who have the E-Pass. Citra is marketing the E-Pass the wrong way by making life harder for motorists who can't afford or simply don't want to subscribe to the E-Pass at this time. The more you bully or hard-sell a prospective customer, the more you will turn him off. Citra's managers may be laboring under the delusion that their arbitrary dedicated lane scheme is succeeding. But it is only succeeding in alienating the toll-paying motorists and stiffening sales resistance to the E-Pass while at the same time increasing traffic congestion, wasteful fuel consumption and air pollution.

* * *

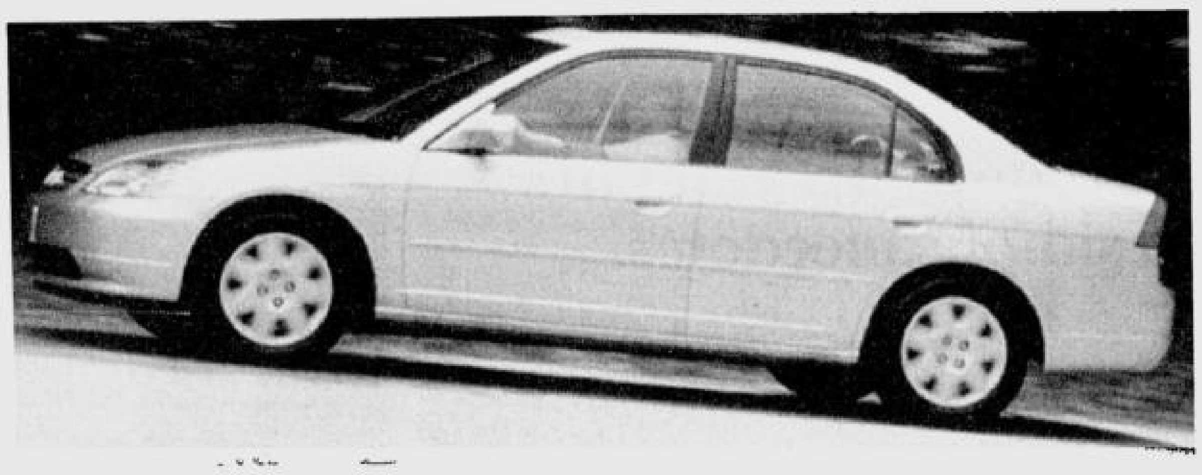
**TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER:** Diplomacy is the art of letting someone have your way.

* * *

*E-mail comments to aida_sevilla @pacific.net.ph*

# All-new Civic launch tomorrow

BY VERNON B. SARNE



THE ALL-NEW Civic

HONDA loyalists have been waiting for this since last year. Their wait is over.

Honda Cars Phils. is unveiling the all-new Civic tomorrow, giving the carmaker the distinction of being the first to launch a new model under the Macapagal administration. After topping local passenger car sales for the past two consecutive years and helping Honda consistently claim the passenger car throne since 1996, the Civic sheds its old skin and innards to give way to its seventh-generation iteration.

The arrival of the all-new Civic strikes fear in the hearts of Honda's competitors, all of which are scrambling to determine which vehicles to introduce in a year which many industry insiders are finding to be very unpredictable. Honda is certainly jumping the gun on the likes of Toyota and Nissan, two of the manufacturers expected to launch their respective new compact sedans this year.

The new Civic—launched in Japan and the United States last September and in Thailand last October—will be officially presented to the press tomorrow at the Glorietta Activity Center in Makati. The public may view it at the same venue starting Saturday until Feb. 14.

The new Civic will come with a new set of 1.5- and 1.6-liter engines, both boasting a "4 to 5 percent improvement in horsepower," according to Honda AVP for corporate communications Arnel Doria. It will still be available in both manual and automatic versions.

The styling is all-new. Depending on the beholder, the new Civic looks either sporty or conservative. With a front that tends to resemble that of the old model from certain angles, the exterior design's greatest strength would have to be the rear, a huge makeover from the predecessor's. The new Civic is also about 2 inches taller, 15 millimeters shorter, and 20 millimeters wider.

But the chief selling point of the new Civic is found in the interior cabin. The interior is a lot roomier. To be exact, an additional 2.3 cubic feet of space. "We're introducing a new dimension in sedan. We call it the Civic dimension. It will redefine sedan interior," Doria explained. Thanks to the bigger interior space, the Civic has been reclassified from subcompact to compact in the US market.

The Civic owes its extra cabin room to clever engineering. For one, Honda had to dump double control arms in favor of the more space-efficient MacPherson struts for the front suspension. They also relocated the power steering assembly and tightly packaged several mechanical components. The roof was made taller and the innovative flat rear floor is being introduced here in the Civic for the first time.

Among other new features is a completely redesigned instrument panel.

For how much? "The prices will be within the vicinity of the current ones—a little over if the peso-dollar rate is above P47," said Doria. Carmakers are known to be very secretive about new car prices. It is even likely the prices of the new Civic have not been finalized as you read this.

Honda has sold more than 10 million Civics since introducing the popular car in 1973. The Civic has been the best-selling small car in the United States for the last six years. In Japan, the new Civic has been bestowed the 2000-2001 Japan Car of the Year award.

THE NBC Tent at the Bonifacio Global City became the venue for car racing aficionados as Joey@92.3 FM staged the exciting "Beyond Extreme Party." Held to celebrate the launch of Shell Helix, the event was highlighted by an exhibit of Michael Schumacher's winning F1 Ferrari, which is on an Asian tour. Raffled off was a free trip to the Malaysian Grand Prix that Zaldy Cayanan won. The affair was capped off by a groovin' concert with Hyperbeat. It was presented in cooperation with Shell Helix and the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.

# Commercial Motors denies talks with Mitsubishi

COMMERCIAL Motors Corp., exclusive distributor of Mercedes-Benz in the Philippines, expressed surprise over a news item carried by another newspaper quoting Mitsubishi Motors Phils. Corp. first vice president Melchor Dizon that the MMPC "will soon distribute Mercedes-Benz vehicles here..."

Charles Patrick Lee, CMC vice president for sales and marketing, said this is "totally untrue, misleading, spurious and has no basis in fact." According to Lee, while it is true that DaimlerChrysler has bought a significant stake in Mitsubishi Motors in Japan, no directives have been received by the CMC from Mercedes-Benz South East Asia regarding any change in working arrangements, much less any indication of any sort of cooperation. He stresses further that so far, absolutely no talks with the local Mitsubishi distributor have been made.

The franchise to distribute Mercedes-Benz products is registered by the CMC with the Board of Investments under the Car Development Program and may not be withdrawn without the explicit consent of the CMC under the CDP guidelines.

Lee further asked for clarification of Dizon's statement that "there is no problem with dealership deal with CMC, the arrangement is renewed on an annual basis." "The statement is deceptive and may be misinterpreted to mean that the MMPC had some kind of dealership deal with the CMC that may be renewed annually, which is totally untrue, presumptive, and manifests a typically foreign below-the-belt domination of Filipino enterprise," Lee added.

"We are already considering taking legal action against the MMPC unless it withdraws these irresponsible statements and issue a public apology to the CMC for damaging our reputation and goodwill. We are prepared to cooperate with any party who will promote Mercedes-Benz, a product we have nurtured and have been proud of since 1972, but not in this deceitful manner," Lee said.

# Must 2001 Handbook available

A MUST-HAVE for motorists and commuters alike, the latest edition of the Motorists' Utilities & Services Tool Handbook is now available at bookstores. The handbook aims to increase one's personal efficiency by giving loads of practical information in one logically indexed compilation.

With its accurate maps of Metro Manila's streets and highways, motorists and commuters get to save on time and money by using it as reference for traveling to new locales. The MUST 2001 also has listings of out-of-town resorts, golf courses and diving destinations.

It has also comprehensive listings of service shops, banks, malls and food delivery stores for instant information.

# Shell Helix launches new formulation

SHELL Helix recently launched its newly revitalized and reformulated motor oils designed to provide superior protection for engines in the most extreme driving conditions. The enhanced line of Shell Helix motor oils—Helix Ultra, Helix Plus and Helix Super—was unveiled at the NBC Tent at The Fort.

The new formulation ensures that the Shell Helix motor oils "stay in grade" at any driving condition, which means that the viscosity of the oil remains the same despite the changing and extreme driving conditions.

The Shell Helix launch was marked by an exhibit and tour dubbed as "Beyond Extreme Exhibitour," which celebrates Shell's winning partnership with Ferrari in the World Formula One Grand Prix Championship races. The Shell-sponsored Ferrari team won as overall champion in the 2000 World Formula One Grand Prix, where Ferrari's Michael Schumacher also won Driver of the Year while Ferrari, Constructor of the Year. The opening of the exhibitour showcased the Ferrari Formula One winning car model, Filipino-owned Ferraris and other exotic sports cars.

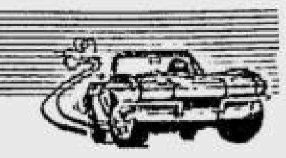
Shell responded to the consumer demand by further improving the formulation of Shell Helix to provide superior protection for all types of engines, surpassing other leading engine oil brands. It has also improved the Helix packaging to make it more dynamic and consumer friendly. Shell Helix containers now have larger labels and an easy-to-use product selection grid at the back label. The packaging also provides a helpful peel off "last oil change" reminder sticker on the back of 4-liter packs.

The "Beyond Extreme Exhibitour" recently kicked off a mall tour at the SM Megamall Atrium and will be at the Festival Mall Carousel Court until Feb. 2 and at the Robinsons Place-Orosa Wing on Feb. 9-11.

The mall tours are whole-day events that will allow car enthusiasts to engage in interactive activities. Racing fans will get to experience the Formula One sound-surround tunnel, play F1 video games and race Hot Wheels. Participants will get the chance to win Shell and Ferrari items.

# Unsolicited advice for Abalos

FULL TANK



*Al S. Mendoza*

JOJO Binay out, Ben Abalos in.

I welcome the change if only because of the hope that Abalos will finally be able to solve the traffic problem in the metropolis, not to mention the city's perennial plague that is garbage.

Binay, as both traffic and garbage czar of Metro Manila, did not exactly fail us. He did his best. To a certain degree, he was successful.

It was his men who helped him fail in his assigned tasks. Had Binay exercised vigilance, maybe, he could have succeeded in licking both ills of the metropolis.

But ultimately, if a mission fails, the leader's to blame. That leader must be man enough to admit it. As one leader said, "The buck stops here."

* * *

**I know Abalos to be a performer. An achiever even. From a brilliant stint as judge of Pasig to a colorful term as mayor of Mandaluyong, Abalos showed a work ethic bordering on dedication. At present, he is Wack Wack president, another position that requires his undivided attention. Wack Wack is the country's second most expensive golf course after Manila Golf Club. His climb to the club's presidency is a rags-to-riches story as Abalos was a former caddy of Wack Wack. Using his caddy fees to sustain his education, Abalos went on to become a lawyer.**

**Hard work. Dedication to duty. Determination. These are his code words to success.**

**Here's wishing Manong Ben success in his reassumption of his job as MMDA boss.**

**An unsolicited advice: Enforce the full force of the law and you'll never go wrong. Begin by arresting all traffic violators, zeroing in on drivers of buses, jeepneys and taxis.**

**The rest will be easy.**

* * *

The first batch of enrollees numbered only 3,000. Several weeks later, that number increased to 8,000. Today, the figure has ballooned to 20,000.

And counting.

I'm referring to the subscribers of the E-Pass, that magical innovation to speed up travel at the Southern Luzon Expressway, thanks mainly to the invention of the Skyway.

The E-Pass, of course, is that sensor attached to the windshield of your car, which makes entry to the Skyway/SLEX smooth and without hassle.

Let me say that Shell Citibank ought to be commended, too, for its pioneering efforts in partnering with the Citra Metro Manila Tollways Corp. for the E-Pass project.

With its unassailable success, I wonder when will the E-Pass be introduced to the Northern Luzon Expressway.

I long to see that day.

* * *

**As I said last week, things are looking up in the automotive industry. Mel Dizon of Mitsubishi, Arnel Doria of Honda and Ariel de Jesus of Toyota said it so. Even Isuzu's Sheila Tolentino has reported continued "fleet" orders for both the X-Trms and Fuegos, not to mention the Trooper's consistent showing at the charts.**

**With the stock market almost back to normal and the peso gaining ground steadily against the dollar, it may yet be a boom year—finally—for the industry in the Year of the Snake.**

* * *

**QUOTE ME:** Make it a habit buckling your seatbelt. It's a good habit.

# People, Events & Products

**REZ GOPEZ-SINDAC**, Editor

## PHOTOWORLD MANILA 2001 SPONSOR

# Kodak highlights digital technology

FOR MILLIONS of people, taking a picture means little more than aiming the camera and pressing the shutter. But if taking pictures meant having to lug around a massive box of a camera and bulky tripod, not to mention using heavy plate glass as "film" for each shot, would they bother at all?

Probably not. Amazingly, it took a high school dropout to revolutionize the cumbersome process. The man, George Eastman, went on to create a global household name for photography and almost everything related to it – Kodak.

### Kodak slogan

Eastman used the slogan "you push the button, we do the rest" to sell the world's first simple camera, which he invented over a century ago. Earlier he had also invented the equipment to manufacture film on a mass basis.

Today, if he were alive, Eastman would probably be startled (but certainly delighted) by his company's continual roll-out of breakthrough technologies and products. This has been particularly true for digital technology, a field Kodak has pioneered in since the mid-1970s.

Five of these products are being launched in the Philippine market via the weeklong Photoworld Manila 2001, Southeast Asia's largest photo industry trade exhibit. These are the Kodak Professional Large Format 3000 Series Inkjet Printer, the Netprinter 812 Photographic Digital Printer, the Kodak Professional 4720 Photo Printer, the Kodak Professional RFS 3600 Film Scanner, and the Kodak Professional DC 620x Digital Camera.

Marketed under the Kodak Professional Division, a division of Eastman Kodak Company, these products also mark the company's return to the annual photo trade exhibit. Kodak is the major sponsor for this year's event being held at the Ayala Center Glorietta in Makati until Jan. 31.

### Digital Technology

"Digital technology is evolving at a tremendous pace, much of it because of Kodak's serious involvement in digital research and development," said Gary Jose, business manager, Kodak professional division, Kodak Philippines Limited. "In Photoworld Manila 2001, our Filipino customers will not only have an enjoyable opportunity to see what has become possible in digital technology, but also be informed that this is now locally available."

The Kodak Professional Large Format 3000 Series Inkjet Printer is a fully integrated system featuring a piezo electric inkjet printer, RIP software, inks, media and laminates. The Netprinter 812 is the world's most cost-effective photographic digital printer. Capable of producing high quality photographic prints from 4"x6" up to 12"x18", its applications include wedding portraiture, senior portraits, package prints, sports, business cards, greeting cards and invitations.

The Kodak Professional 4720 Photo Printer is the first small format digital printer that combines photographic quality output with the ruggedness needed by professionals. It offers versatile print sizes and prints at a rate of over 60 prints per hour. The Kodak Professional RFS 3600 Film Scanner is user-friendly and portable. With 3600 dpi, it exceeds the most demanding needs of users, whether for newspaper, government, corporate, law enforcement, creative or home applications.

The Kodak Professinal DCS 620x Digital Camera utilizes Nikon's flagship professional F5 body and combines the best award-winning Kodak imaging technology with Kodak's latest charge-coupled device (CCD) advancements. Among its many revolutionary features, the DCS 620x can transmit images by plugging a cellular phone directly into the camera.

**ENVIRONMENTAL LEGAL DESK**

Nowhere to run to for legal problems concerning the environment? Bantay Kalikasan, a program of ABS-CBN Foundation Inc., and the Integrated Bar of the Philippines will be establishing environmental legal desks in different regions of the country. The environmental desks will be staffed by lawyers specially trained to handle cases involving the environment, and by BK's Hotline volunteer pool. Present for the signing of the memorandum of agreement held recently in Pasig City were (seated, from left) BK's Hotline operations manager Toto Balayon, BK program director Marlo Mendoza, AFI managing director Gina Lopez, IBP president Arthur Lim, IBP's lawyers Teofilo Pilandi Jr. and Arturo Tiu. Also present were (standing, from left) IBP lawyers Conrado Sajor, Agustinus V. Gonzaga, Roland Inting, Paulino Ersanto and Alberto Hidalgo.

SECURITY BANK
SMART

**NEW PAYMENT OPTION**

Security Bank Corporation recently forged an agreement with Smart Communications for the former to accept payments from Smart subscribers over-the-counter. Present during the contract signing are (from left) Mariza Limbo, SBC Dela Rosa branch manager; Mariano Magbanua Jr., AVP-SBC Retail Banking Group; Ma. Rodora Bañares, SVP-SBC Retail Banking Group; Godofredo Calica Jr., Smart financial controller; Lorelai Grutas, Smart marketing manager; and Smart's Grace Caingal.

**BOLINAO WEBSITE LAUNCHED**

In support of the government's E-commerce law, Bolinao Security and Investigation Service Inc., one of the pioneers in providing security and investigation services, finally conquered the web last December during the agency's 50th founding anniversary celebration. Spearheaded by Urbano Caasi III, vice president for business development and corporate planning of First Penta, Bolinao can now strongly contribute to the country's economic growth. Visit Bolinao at www.bolinao.ph.

# New book breathes life to simple anecdotes

"LIFE in a Kaleidoscope," a 99-page book on the facts and ironies of life, was launched recently at the Music and Memories Bar and Video Lounge, 2/F IDC Center, Kalayaan Ave., Makati City.

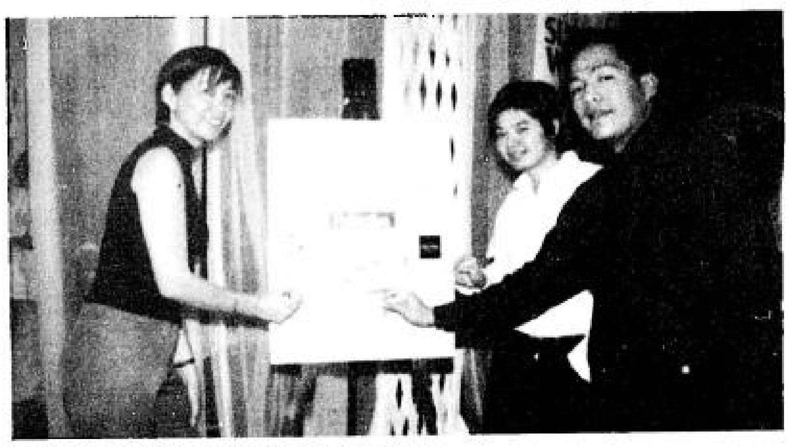
Rev. Felipe Nepomuceno, architect Danny Panganiban, lawyer Mike Larida, lawyer Lut Inocencio of National Life and Tony Alumno Jr. were among the event's special guests.

Written by Ronaldo R. Soliman, the book consists of 366 simple anecdotes that people encounter everyday – some funny, some serious, but leading to one message: the simple mishaps that are oftentimes disregarded are capable of changing a person's life.

"Our lives are like pattern in a kaleidoscope – oddly beautiful, diversely colorful and no two will ever be essentially alike," the author said in his foreword.

Soliman has had a wide range of exposure to various fields including accountancy, real estate, insurance, marketing, law and now journalism. A Certified Public Accountant, he is currently the chair and chief executive officer of Graceland Estates and Country Club, the first and only country club in Tayabas, Quezon. He is also involved in the insurance business as founder of the Intertrade Insurance Broker.

Copies are available at Music and Memories Bar and Video Lounge (896-9113) and soon at all leading bookstores nationwide.



**IN CELEBRATION OF WOMEN**

Rommel Narvaez, Palmolive Naturals Shower Cream brand manager (right), GP Reyes, Sari-Sari Store advertising and promotions director (center) and Noelle Ramirez, Slimmers' World marketing director (left) lead the launch of Palmolive Naturals Shower Cream's Feminine Indulgence promo, a tie-up between Slimmers' World International and Sari-Sari Store. In store for Palmolive Naturals Shower Cream users are free soothing facial treatments at Slimmers' World and five percent discount on Sari-Sari Store items.

# Discover man's romance with food

BEOFRE you turn away from that unfinished meal, go back 2000 years and see how ancient men "prepared" dinner. Better yet, visit the Nescafé Exploratorium 2000 Museum and get a first-hand look at the delicious and appetizing history of man's romance with food.

Presented by Nido Full Cream Milk, the Story of Food is an engaging walk through the development of man's food-gathering method and the changing ways of food preparation throughout time.

The Nescafé Exploratorium 2000 Museum was developed to educate youngsters and children in a manner they will find interesting and enjoyable. Adult visitors will have an equally pleasant visit as they are treated to a visual feast of artifacts from the past and interesting bits of information about the present and the future.

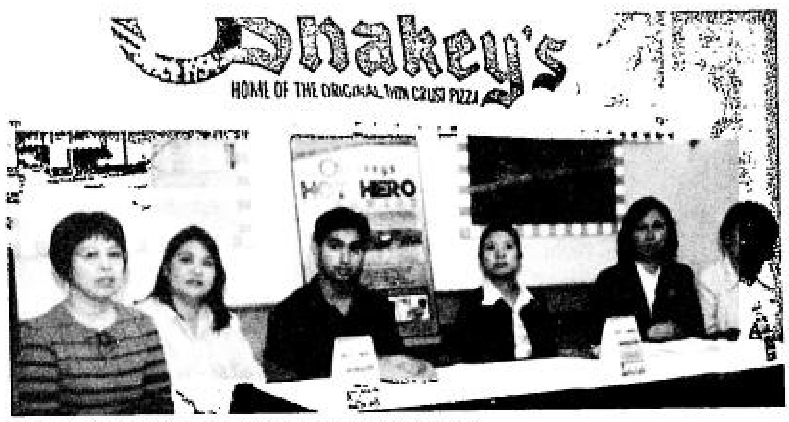
The Nescafé Exploratorium 2000 Museum is a multimedia and interactive exhibit featuring an overview of the first 2000 years of man, and a glimpse into his future. Items on loan from some of the world's leading museums will be showcased.

The Nescafé Exploratorium 2000 Museum is composed of 14 modules and divided unto three main sub-sections; the "Hall of Exhibits," the "How do they do that?" section and the interactive games area.

Apart form food and nutrition, the Nescafé Exploratorium 2000 Museum also features breakthroughs in science and technology, culture and the arts, sports and entertainment.

Open from 8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m., the museum is presented is association with Milo, Nido, Carnation Plus and Nestlé Fit N' Fresh. With the special participation of Nokia, Burlington, Bayer, Godiva, Zoids by Tomy, Mister Donut, Daewoo Electronics and Viva Entertainment.

The Nescafé Exploratorium 2000 Museum is located at the 3rd level of the Festival Supermall in Filinvest, Alabang. For reservations, call 899-1643 or 899-1943 to 44.


Shakey's
HOME OF THE ORIGINAL THIN CRUST PIZZA
HOT HERO

**AGASSI IS SHAKEY'S ENDORSER**

Fast rising TV personality and rapper Carlos Agassi (3rd from L) has joined Shakey's family as its latest product endorser. In a formal launching held recently at Shakey's Rockwell Powerplant Mall, Agassi was featured in the country's famous pizza restaurant's latest TV commercial dubbed, "One Fine Day." Shakey's also announced the comeback of its famous sandwich, Hot Hero, now in two delicious dressings: Thousand Island and Hot Hero and can be enjoyed in three different combo package.

children
Tupperware

**TUPPERWARE-GMA FOUNDATION PARTNERSHIP**

Tupperware Philippines, one of the world's largest direct-selling companies, recently joined GMA Foundation Inc.'s Give a Gift: Alay sa Batang Pinoy 2000 project in line with its firm commitment to champion the plight of children. Tupperware donated P1 million worth of Math-in-a-flash cards, learning aids in the teaching of basic mathematical operations for distribution to 8 remote provinces for use of public elementary schools. At the turnover ceremony are (from left) Leah from GMA Foundation; Julie Gallos, operations manager, GMA Foundation Inc.; Corito Singson, TW president and managing director; Irma Palencia, TW VP for marketing and Pete dela Cruz, TW VP for finance.

**COMPAQ-ABN AMRO DEAL**

Experience red-hot personal computing as Compaq Computer Philippines. Inc. delivers the freshest, most innovative computing power of the Presario e-Lifestyle series through a joint initiative with ABN AMRO Savings Bank's Personal Loan Program. Signing the agreement are (from left) Vicky Agorilla, Compaq consumers sales manager; Nilo S. Cruz, Compaq president and managing director; Mike Osmeña, ABN AMRO sales group head and Baby Latinazo, ABN AMRO product manager.

BITS & Clips

## Catering seminar

CATERERS, restaurateurs and those planning to start or manage a catering business are invited by ProActive Center for Training (PACT) to its Managing a Catering Business Seminar-Workshop on Feb. 5-13, 2001 at The Triple V Express, 2/F of Bridgeway, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City from 1-5 p.m. Reservations are currently being accepted on a first-come first-served basis at 823-4947; 0919-5500601 or email at pactserv@info.com.ph. Only 20 participants will be accepted. Seminar fee covers field trip to food and equipment suppliers, all handouts, snacks, certificate of completion and workshop materials.

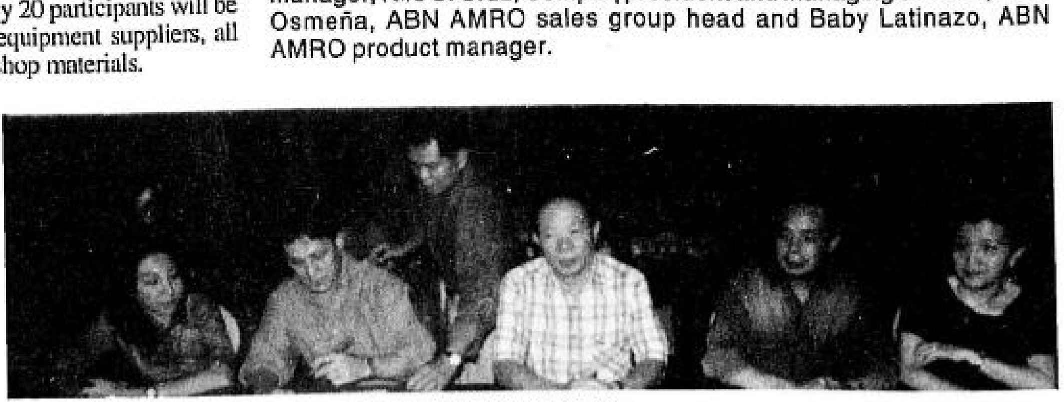
Coleman
Powerm

**PRODUCT DEMONSTRATION**

Bobby Encarnacion and Eunice Silos of Coleman Asia break up a slab of concrete with a jackhammer powered by a Coleman Powermate portable generator, during a product demonstration at the recent launch of the leading American portable generator brand Coleman Powermate's new models at the Richmonde Hotel in Mandaluyong City. The new models are "more powerful, less noisy and consume less fuel," said Coleman Powermate area manager David Nouvelot. For orders and dealership inquiries, call 637-8472.

## Italianni's Bakery and Café to open at Glorietta IV

ITALIANNI's Bakery & Café will open its first store at Glorietta IV this month. The new concept is a small replica of the full-scale Italianni's Restaurant in Greenbelt, Makati. The new outlet will serve quick, individual dishes that will include Italianni's famous pastas, sandwiches, pizza, desserts, some entrees and freshly baked breads and pastries. Though smaller in capacity, it will still carry Italianni's trademark homey dining atmosphere and ebullient service by friendly and efficient staff. The opening of Italianni's Bakery & Café is part of Bistro Holding Corporation's expansion plans for the year 2001.



**LAS PIÑAS CITY LEADERS INK COVENANT**

Tropang Pinoy show host Tony Tamayo, popular actor Tirso Cruz III and Lakas-NUCD Las Piñas Chapter chiar Gabriel "Ben" Casimiro signed the covenant for good governance held at Tamayo's residence recently. Various groups is urging Katropang Tony Tamayo to m for Las Piñas' lone seat in congress and Cruz as the city's vice mayor. Witnessing the signing are (from left) Cruz's wife, Lyn Y. Cruz, Tirso Cruz III, civic leader Edwin Sonoy (standing), Lakas Las Piñas chair Ben Casimiro and Tony Tamayo with wife Daisy.

# Net portfolio fund outflow hits $149M

**BY CLARISSA S. BATINO**

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday said portfolio fund outflows last year hit $3 billion, or $149 million more than the inflows in the same period of $2.85 billion.

The amount of 'hot' money brought out of the country exceeded inflows as investors and fund managers shied away from the Philippines due to the then prevailing economic and political crisis.

BSP data showed that the $2.85 billion in portfolio investments pumped into the economy last year was 76.7 percent lower than $12.29 billion recorded in the previous year.

Last year's net outflow reflect a reversal of the 1999 record that showed a net inflow of $473.4 million.

In the first week of January, some $28.8 million in portfolio funds were infused while $13.2 million was brought out resulting in a net inflow of $15.6 million.

Analysts expect fund inflows to rise substantially starting the last week of January during the first week of the Macapagal administration.

The stock market and the peso recovered in the first few days of the new government. The peso had rebounded to 47.50 to $1 on Jan. 19, from a low of 54.79 to $1, before settling at an average of 49 to $1.

Foreign portfolio investments refer to purchases by non-residents of stocks listed at the Philippine Stock Exchange, government securities and money market instruments and peso deposits funded by inward foreign exchange remittances.

"After the political crisis, we should be back on the radar screens of foreign investors. We have been out of their screens since October," said BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura.

Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo said the government has been receiving a lot of inquiries from potential investors as confidence in the financial markets returns.

BSP's data on hot money were based on the reports of foreign custodian banks such as HSBC, Standard Chartered Bank, Citibank and Deutsche Bank. They account for 90 percent of the total portfolio investments in the country.

Romulo said the government still prefers direct investors rather than portfolio investors since hot money could be easily taken out of the country.

"We want to talk to investors and convince them to come back. This is better than borrowing since they take the risks whereas when we borrow, we are the ones taking the risk," said Romulo.

Buenaventura said that more hot funds should slip back this year to take advantage of dirt-cheap prices in the local bourse.

Hot money has been going out of the country for the most part of last year. Inflows started trickling back in late September and analysts said this was because local stocks have been already trading at very low prices.

MARK Gilbert (right), BMW Philippines Corp. president, shakes hands with Heinz-Jurgen Preissler, head of Bayerische Motoren Werke AG's sales unit. The German automaker has announced plans to invest some P420 million to assemble BMW vehicles here. ROGER MARGALLO

# BMW to invest in assembly plant, sees growing demand

BAYERISCHE Motoren Werke AG, Germany's No. 3 carmaker, said yesterday it would invest in a Philippine venture to assemble BMW cars to meet an expected increase in local demand for luxury vehicles.

The company would take as much as a 70-percent stake in BMW Philippines Corp., while Asia Carmakers Corp., a local assembler of Daihatsu Motor Co. cars and a BMW importer, would take the rest, said Luder Paysen, senior vice president of BMW's sales division.

The companies plan to invest some P140 million.

"The Philippines is a very promising market," said Paysen. "The timing of our entry is perfect." Paysen said the venture was planned long before the ouster two weeks ago of former President Joseph Estrada under a cloud of corruption charges.

The Philippine venture is the second Asian investment BMW has announced this week.

The company said Monday it would build a $24-million car and motorcycle assembly plant in Indonesia.

BMW has similar operations in Japan, Korea and Thailand.

BMW began selling cars in the Philippines five years ago.

Annual sales reached a peak of 1,000 in 1996 and 1997 before slumping to 256 units last year, or about 9 percent of the country's total luxury car sales.

*Bloomberg*

# Gov't ready to rescind PNB loan

**BY CLARISSA S. BATINO**

FINANCE Secretary Alberto Romulo said yesterday the government would rescind its P25-billion emergency loan agreement with Philippine National Bank should it find this deal disadvantageous to its interest.

"We will make inquiries about this loan. If this is found to be disadvantageous to the government, we are prepared to rescind it," Romulo told reporters.

He said the government would create an inter-agency task force to review the PNB deal and other transactions involving alleged behest loans.

"We will adopt the necessary measures if we find it to be disadvantageous, and we will apply the rule of law," he said.

Romulo said the government was prepared to demand immediate payment from PNB and scrap an earlier agreement that allowed the bank to settle its debt through a dacion en pago—payment in kind—arrangement, he said.

PNB is set to settle a P15-billion debt it owes the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas by paying acquired assets.

BSP Deputy Governor Alberto Reyes said earlier that PNB, controlled by beer and tobacco tycoon Lucio Tan, could use its foreclosed real assets to pay for an emergency loan it obtained from the central bank on Oct. 6 last year.

"The P15 billion will be paid within the 180-day period, but it could be in cash or in assets," Reyes said.

He said the PNB loan would not be converted into a long-term obligation, as the bank previously planned.

Among the assets to be surrendered to the central bank were the PNB Financial Center, which had a book value of P4 billion and an appraised value of about P10 billion.

PNB plans to settle some P10 billion it owes the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. by transferring government liabilities to PDIC worth about P9 billion.

These debts include a P5-billion loan the Bureau of Customs has used to pay its obligations to Swiss inspection firm Societe Generale de Surveillance and a P4.5-billion loan that a Philippine sugar trading company got from PNB under the Marcos administration.

The BSP and PDIC extended a P25-billion emergency loan to PNB in October last year.

PNB sought a short-term emergency loan to ease its liquidity problems. Critics tagged it as another "crony deal" of the Estrada administration, considering PNB was owned largely by Tan, one of former President Joseph Estrada's biggest campaign contributors.

PNB claimed it experienced heavy withdrawals in the last week of September to early October. Some in the industry, however, claimed only a few depositors with big stakes withdrew from the bank.

PNB never admitted the P25 billion it got from the BSP and PDIC was an emergency loan, PNB president Feliciano Miranda Jr. insisted it was part of the bank's rehabilitation plan.

# Subic Freeport property up for development

**BY ELIZABETH MARCELO**
*PDI Central Luzon Desk*

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—Eight pieces of prime land here are up for grabs to potential developers in the hospitality, industrial, commercial and residential property development sectors.

Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority Chair Felicito Payumo said the offer was the new marketing tack adopted by SBMA for assets that have never been tapped for other uses since American troops pulled out of the former naval base eight years ago.

Under the marketing and development strategy called Pro-Active Marketing 2000, SBMA personnel and experts from the World Bank-funded Subic II team of consultants have identified "large marketable sites that are potentially useful for long term, multi-use developments."

Nine sites were identified but one is being developed into a marine "exploratorium" by the Subic Bay Marinex, which will put up shows featuring dolphins and whales similar to the Seaworld marine parks in the United States.

The "exploratorium" will rise on a four-hectare area at the Camayan Wharf.

Payumo said that Pro-Active Marketing entered its second phase, dubbed as Major Property Marketing 2001, which covers eight sites that will be offered for rent or for sale to investors.

Two prime sites are being offered at the Subic Bay Freeport Gateway, which covers the naval supply depot, and Royal Duty Free complex near the Tipo expressway, the freeport's main access road to Metro Manila.

The Subic gateway master plan has identified an eight-hectare property for the development of a convention/exhibition center for international and domestic conferences, fairs and exhibitions, and a business hotel to house convention participants and visitors.

The development plan for the area also includes the construction of office buildings, commercial shopping malls and other activities that will support the Subic port operation.

At the freeport's central business district, a six-hectare area is envisioned to become a mini-business park for light industries, particularly those in software development, e-business, information technology users and incubator industries.

The CBD is the first site at the freeport that was developed for commercial enterprises such as shopping centers, hotels and restaurants.

## GOINGS ON

### J. Walter head in RP

MILES

MILES Colebrook, group president of JWT International, arrived in Manila yesterday from London to attend a series of meetings with the company's regional executive committee and to be guest of honor at the official opening of J. Walter Thompson's new office in Makati on Friday, Feb. 2.

### MMPC denies Benz sales plan

MITSUBISHI Motor Philippines Corp. president Makoto Maeda said that the company or any of its staff did not make any statement that the company would sell Mercedes Benz vehicles in the Philippines soon.

Maeda said MMPC had sent a letter to Commercial Motors to clarify the news reports "that came out of innocent statements made by his staff." He said that MMPC deeply regrets that his staff statements were misquoted in the reports.

Melchor R. Dizon, MMPC first vice president for marketing, said that the press completely misquoted him and quoted out of context his passing comments with respect to Mercedes Benz vehicles.

### Contract signed

THE STRATEGIC alliance of UK engineering services specialist Amec and US contractor Fluor Daniel recently signed a $150-million contract with Shell Philippines Exploration BV for the maintenance of the Malampaya Deep Water Gas-to-Power Project.

Ian Hume and David J. Greer, managing directors of Amec Offshore Services and Shell Philippines Exploration BV, respectively, signed the contract witnessed by Minister of State of Scotland Brian Wilson and George F. Ruffner, counselor for commercial affairs of the American Embassy.

### UnionBank-PhilBX tieup

PHILIPPINE Internet Business Exchange and Internet banking leader UnionBank of the Philippines recently formalized a partnership to bring in the first end-to-end and complete e-procurement services available in the local market today.

PhilBX, a member of the System Standards Inc. Group, is a B2B e-commerce portal connecting small, medium and large enterprises into a one-stop trade exchange. Under the PhilBX procurement system, registered suppliers can display and offer their products online, provide price quotations, and respond to auction requests from buyers. The system also allows buyers to search, view compare suppliers' products and prices, raise product requests and purchase orders.

i n v e n t
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HP LaserJet's Getting Personal...1 on 1!

1 Get a chance to win personal tools such as a Nokia cellphone, HP Jornada handheld PC or an HP Omnibook 6000 notebook!

From January 2, 2001 to February 28, 2001, every buyer of an HP LaserJet 1100 or 1100A printer will be given a raffle coupon for a chance to win any of the following prizes:

| | |
|---|---|
| One First Prize: | HP Omnibook laptop computer |
| Three Second Prizes: | HP Jornada handheld PC |
| Ten Third Prizes: | Nokia cellphone* |

After filling up the coupon, it must be dropped at the drop box located at the store where the LaserJet was purchased no later than Feburary 28, 2001. The draw will be on Monday, March 5, 2001 at 3:00 PM at the HP offices, Rufino Building, Ayala Avenue, Makati, under the supervision of the DTI. Winners will be notified by registered mail. Claimants must present the raffle claim stub and proof of purchase to Mojica, de la Paz & Associates, Valuepoint Executive Apartments, 227 Salcedo St., Legaspi Village, Makati. Prizes may be claimed up to 60 days from notification. Cellphone prizes are transferrable but not convertible to cash. A participant can only win once. If his name is drawn more than once, he gets the bigger prize.
Those disqualified from joining this promotion are employees of Hewlett-Packard, their dealers and advertising agencies and relatives up to the second degree of affinity or consanguinity.

2 Buy 1 printer, get 1 toner FREE!

From January 2, 2001 to February 28, 2001 every buyer of the HP LaserJet 4050, 2100 or 5000 printers will receive one free HP toner. To receive the toner, claimants must present proof of purchase to Mojica, de la Paz & Associates, 3rd floor, Valuepoint Executive Apartments, 227 Salcedo St., Legaspi Village, Makati. Deadline for claiming is April 30, 2001.
For this promotion, the 20% tax of prizes exceeding P10,000 will be paid by Hewlett-Packard.

*Cellphones shall not be used to obtain new subscriptions from Globe Telecom.

**Hewlett-Packard Phils., Corp.**, 9F, Rufino Pacific Tower, 6784 Ayala Avenue, Makati City.

Customer Interaction Number: 636 9888. Website: http:// www.hp.com.ph. E-mail: ask_us@hp.com

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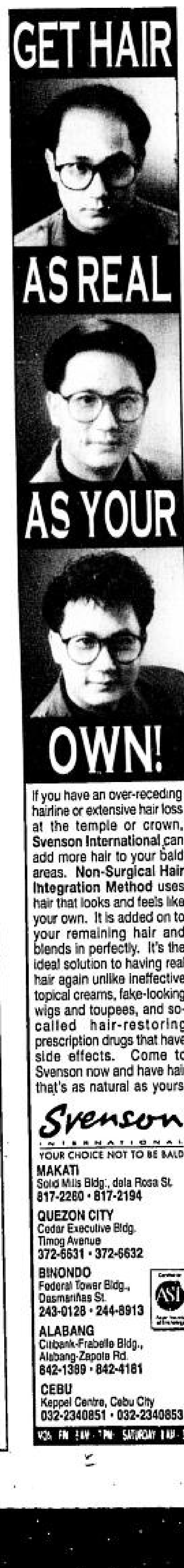

If you have an over-receding hairline or extensive hair loss at the temple or crown, **Svenson International** can add more hair to your bald areas. **Non-Surgical Hair Integration Method** uses hair that looks and feels like your own. It is added on to your remaining hair and blends in perfectly. It's the ideal solution to having real hair again unlike ineffective topical creams, fake-looking wigs and toupees, and so-called hair-restoring prescription drugs that have side effects. Come to Svenson now and have hair that's as natural as yours!

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Alabang-Zapote Rd.
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MON - FRI 8AM - 7PM · SATURDAY 8AM - 5PM

# Deep rate cut to boost stocks

NEW YORK—Wall Street is acting like a spoiled child this week. Give it what it wants—a half-percentage point cut in US interest rates—and it will be temporarily satisfied. Anything less and it will throw a tantrum.

The US Federal Reserve was widely expected to lower its key Fed funds short-term interest rate by an aggressive 50 basis points at the end of its two-policy-setting meeting on Wednesday, making it the second such move this month.

That could put stock market investors in a buying mood, but it was unlikely to give them too much encouragement since most had already bet a deep cut was in the bag, analysts said.

"Maybe you get a quick blip upward," said James Crawford, a portfolio manager at Trevor Stewart Burton & Jacobsen Inc. "Expectations have built in for a good drop in rates so, therefore, I think the rise is not going to be dramatic."

A smaller rate cut, or none at all, is likely to hurt the stock market.

"The case for 50 basis points is not open and shut, but it is certainly doable and since the market expects it, they'll probably do it," said Pierre Ellis, a senior economist at Decision Economics. "The negative reaction (from a quarter-point cut) would be more dramatic than any positive reaction would be if they do 50."

All 25 primary dealers of US government securities are predicting the Fed will cut interest rates by 50 basis points this week, lowering its key Fed funds interest rate to 5.5 percent.

Earlier in January, the Fed took US financial markets by surprise when it cut interest rates by half a percentage point well ahead of this week's regularly scheduled policy-setting meeting.

The central bank's action put an end to a string of Fed rate hikes—six since June 1999—aimed at keeping the blockbuster, decade-long US economic expansion from overheating.

It also sent stocks rocketing higher, and the implication that the Fed was doing what it could to keep economic growth from decelerating too rapidly had since underpinned the market.

Year-to-date, the Dow Jones industrial average is down 0.6 percent, but the technology-heavy Nasdaq composite index—severely battered last year—is up 14.6 percent, and the Standard & Poor's 500 index is up 3.4 percent.

With the US manufacturing sector in a severe slump and expectations for corporate earnings rapidly eroding, investors are hoping lower interest rates will make borrowing easier, thus encouraging personal and corporate spending.

Fed Chair Alan Greenspan bolstered Wall Street's conviction that an aggressive rate cut was around the corner in his Senate testimony last week when he said the economy had slowed dramatically and that growth was "probably very close to zero."

A mere 25-basis-point cut could slap stocks lower. The other scenario—the Fed would leave rates unchanged—might be disastrous for Wall Street, analysts said.

"If the Fed goes and flagrantly does something other than what's expected, they have to expect repercussions," Ellis said. "They don't like that, so the worst probably is that they would (cut rates 25 basis points)."

There may be some upside to a quarter-point cut, however, since it would signify that the Fed views the US economic situation as less dire than it might seem.

"If it's only 25 basis points, it could be because the economy is stronger than people expected," said Michelle Clayman, chief investment officer at New Amsterdam Partners.

In that case, the market might judge whether the Fed had done enough to stave off recession largely based on the slew of economic data slated for this week, including reports on consumer confidence, gross domestic product and the US labor market, Clayman said.

***Reuters***

# *China told to live up to WTO commitments*

WASHINGTON—US Trade Representative-designate Robert Zoellick has warned that China must honor promises made in a historic market-opening trade deal with Washington before it is allowed to join the WTO.

Zoellick, named by President George W. Bush to head the US drive for free trade, also made clear during a Senate confirmation hearing that Taiwan must be allowed to enter the World Trade Organization at the same time as China.

China is currently negotiating WTO entry protocols in Geneva and negotiations have snagged over the issues of agriculture and services, more than a year after the trade deal was reached with Washington.

"There is no doubt in my mind that China must be held to commitments that it made as part of that process," Zoellick said in testimony to the Senate finance committee.

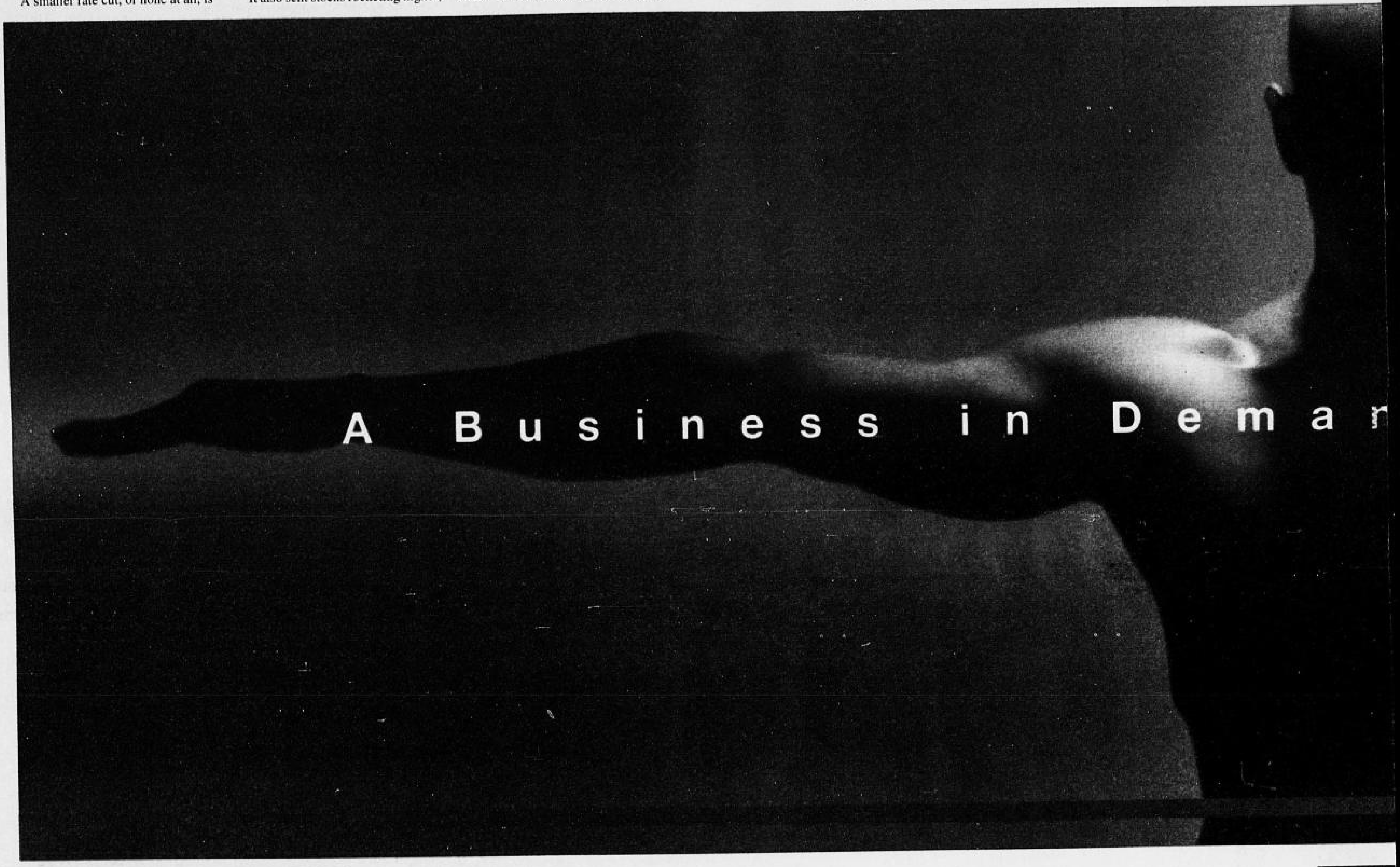
"Even prior to the nomination of this position, I have urged the Chinese to follow through on their commitments, because this is clearly going to be a challenging implementation."

Zoellick said Taiwan's WTO membership was also a crucial issue.

"I feel very strongly that that's important for Taiwan, and ultimately (for) its relationship with Beijing."

"The administration will have no weakness on this issue," said Zoellick, a 47-year-old lawyer and former official in the administration of George Bush, the current president's father.

He added that while still a private citizen last year, he had warned Chinese officials in Washington: "Any effort to mess this up would be an explosive issue here." ***AFP***



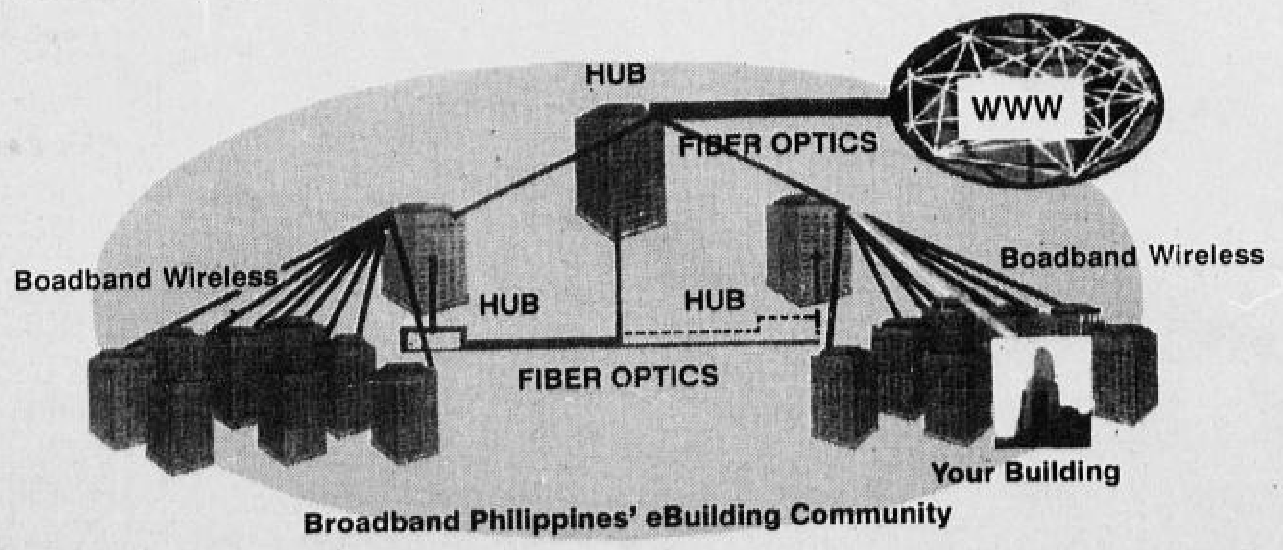
# Broadband Wireless Technology-Providing the most reliable service in the country.

Broadband Philippines, the country's premier broadband service provider, introduces a state-of-the-art technology known as Broadband Wireless Technology in the Philippine communications scene.

**Broadband Wireless Technology uses microwave frequencies to transmit your data at speeds up to 4 Gbps. With new modulation schemes being developed now, this capacity will be increased further by 4 to 5 times. Broadband Wireless technology is superior in the sense that it can be deployed rapidly,** is cost-effective and future-proof. Being cost-effective means Broadband Philippines can translate this into better value and service to its customers. Future proof means that it is able to scale upwards and integrate with old and new systems or applications.

Aside from Broadband Wireless Technology, Broadband Philippines will also be using Fiber Optics, the ultimate solution to Internet and data networks. With Fiber Optics Technology, glass threads are used to transmit data using light as a medium. In addition, data is transmitted digitally (the natural form of computer data) rather than in analog form. This technology greatly increases speed of transmission by multiples of thousands.

Broadband Wireless Technology and Fiber Optics provide the best combination of capacity, economics, and ease of deployment. This combination provides Broadband Philippines a quantum leap over its competitors and allows it to offer the most reliable service in the country.



Broadband Philippines' eBuilding Community

*With all the talk about Broadband lately, freelance writer Maelyn M. Angulo recently sat down with Broadband Philippines Chairman and CEO Joey de Venecia and their VP for Marketing Martin Nery to find out more about the company's plans.*

**Angulo: What is broadband?**

**De Venecia:** Broadband communications is the next step in integrating Philippine corporations with the world. It changes the way we do business. You're able to transfer data files at very high speed. You are able to manage communication processes in a more efficient way at less cost.

Broadband is basically a highway that we are setting up. On this highway, companies can work as one. If you have a company and you want to communicate with your sales teams, you can meet with them in virtually one location using this broadband highway. You can have five remote offices having video conferences with the sales manager to plan sales strategies for the day or for the week. Top managers can have video conferences with anyone in the organization at any given time.

You will need at least a 384 kbp (thousand bits of data per second link from a telecommunications company to be able to do vide conferencing. And that's very expensive. For small and mediun enterprises, it's very costly. That is what we are planning to address.

**Angulo: How do you plan to introduce broadband in the Philippines?**

**De Venecia:** Broadband Philippines is the first telecommunication operator in the country tha will use both wired and wireles technologies. On the first-mile connection to the customers, it is wha you call the broadband wireless o the wireless protocol whose quality is equivalent to fiber optics. Ou value proposition is we will be delivering fiber optic quality communication to customers to enabl them to do a wide array of service like video conferencing; set up private networks, have faster Interne connectivity, and other things a very reasonable cost. Since ou network will be both wired an wireless, we are able to effectivel lower our charges to customers

Br

# *Toyota: No interest in DaimlerChrysler*

TOKYO—Japan's biggest automaker, Toyota Motor Corp., said yesterday it had no interest in buying German-US auto giant DaimlerChrysler AG, dismissing speculation about a possible takeover.

"Toyota is not considering buying the DaimlerChrysler group or even buying any part of it or a stake in the group," a spokeswoman said. "Toyota has no such interest."

The comments came after a slide in DaimlerChrysler shares following losses at its Chrysler unit prompted talk that it was seeking advice on ways to head off a possible takeover bid.

DaimlerChrysler had hired Deutsche Bank AG and US financial firm JP Morgan Chase & Co. Inc. to advise it on the matter, industry sources said.

The sources said only Toyota would have the resources to launch such a bid for DaimlerChrysler. Toyota, the world's third-biggest automaker, has long trodden a lone path, preferring not to get into alliances with others.

Graeme Maxton, automotive analyst with the Economist Intelligence Unit, dismissed the Toyota speculation as "off the wall."

"Japanese companies don't tend to make hostile bids, and German companies don't tend to welcome hostile bids if anybody ever does (make one)," he told CNN.

Maxton said it was possible that one of the stronger European car companies such as Volkswagen AG, Renault SA or Peugeot SA might be interested in DaimlerChrysler, as might US rivals General Motors Corp. or Ford Motor Co. ***Reuters***

# US consumer confidence falls

WASHINGTON—Consumer confidence in the US economy this month showed its biggest decline since the beginning of the last recession, giving Federal Reserve policymakers more reason to cut interest rates by as much as a half percentage point on Wednesday.

The Conference Board's consumer confidence index fell to 114.4 this month, the lowest level since December 1996, from December's 128.6. The January reading, the fourth straight decrease, was largely due to the lowest consumer expectations in more than seven years.

Consumer confidence was a "crucial" line of defense in an economy with a growth rate now "close to zero," Fed Chair Alan Greenspan said last week.

Optimism drives consumer spending, which is two-thirds of the nation's economic growth.

"Consumers' increasing pessimism about the short-term outlook has sent the expectations index into territory normally seen prior to a recession," said Lynn Franco, an economist at the Conference Board in New York.

Analysts expected an index reading of 125 after December's originally reported 128.3. The January reading was the lowest since 114.2 in December 1996. The point decline this month was the largest since it fell 23 points in October 1990.

An index tracking consumer expectations for the next six months fell to 77 this month from 96.9 in December. January's reading was the lowest since 66.7 in October 1993.

A measure of consumers' assessment of present conditions fell to 170.5 in January from 176.1. While declining, the index measuring present conditions "does not yet suggest the economy has completely run out of steam," Franco said.

The New York research group surveys about 5,000 households about general economic conditions, their employment prospects and their spending plans. The index was 100 in 1985.

The Fed's policy-setting Open Market Committee, which meets Tuesday and Wednesday, is expected to cut its benchmark overnight bank lending rate by another half percentage point following a surprise half-point reduction on Jan. 3, according to all 25 bond dealers that trade directly with the Fed in a Bloomberg survey.

"They are going to have to keep cutting rates," said Cary Leahey, an economist at Deutsche Bank Securities Inc. in New York, before the report. "The situation is even a little more dire than people realize."

Greenspan told the Senate budget committee last week that the economic slowdown was "dramatic," suggesting he saw a greater threat to the almost 10-year-old expansion than he did three weeks earlier.

With the economy slowing more than Fed officials had hoped, "the crucial issue is whether that marked decline breaches consumer confidence because there is something different about a recession from other times in the economy," Greenspan said.

While the recent decline in the consumer confidence index isn't as large as the slide that occurred just prior to the last economic recession in 1990-1991, the pattern is similar. ***Bloomberg***

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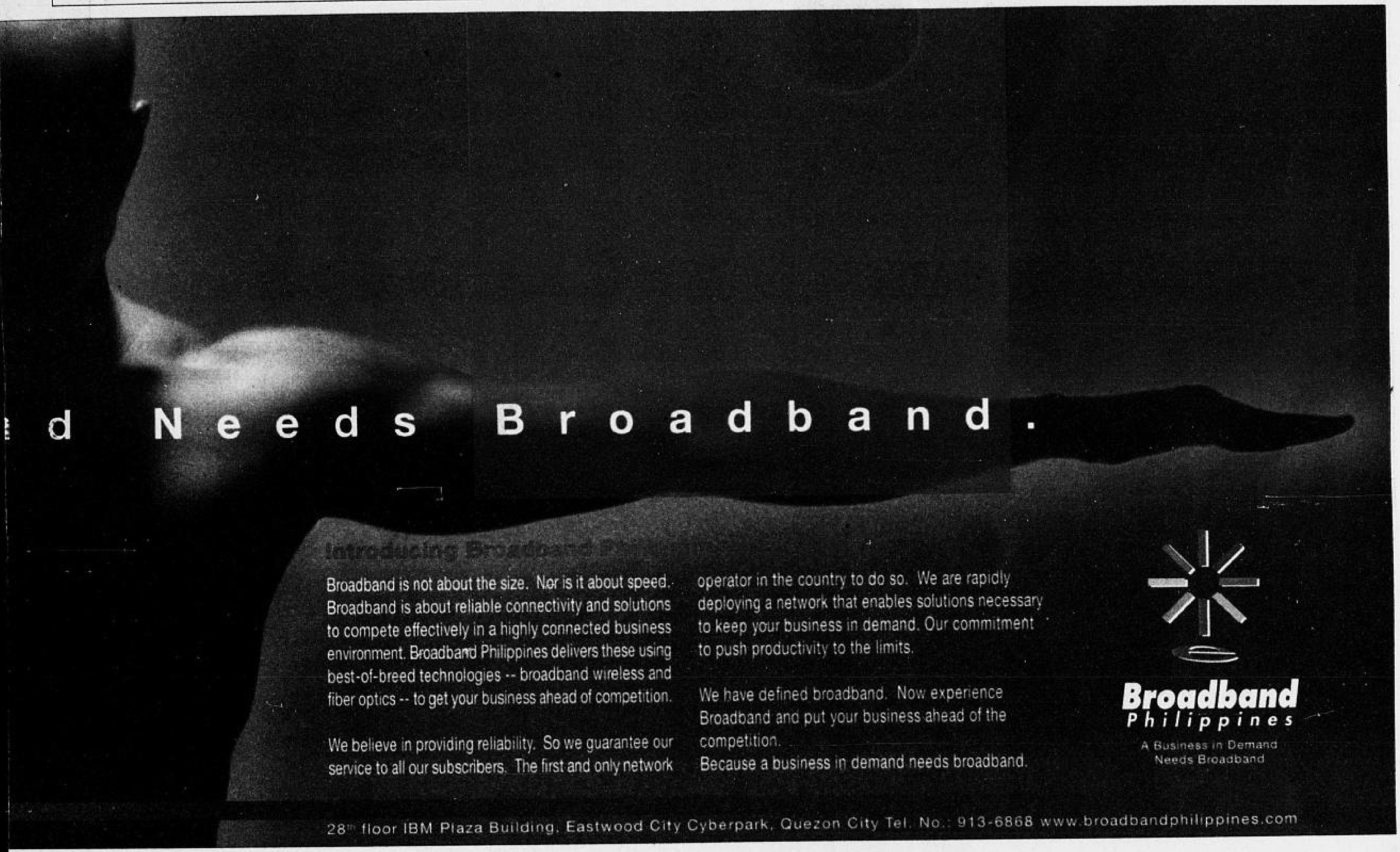


Introducing Broadband

Broadband is not about the size. Nor is it about speed. Broadband is about reliable connectivity and solutions to compete effectively in a highly connected business environment. Broadband Philippines delivers these using best-of-breed technologies -- broadband wireless and fiber optics -- to get your business ahead of competition.

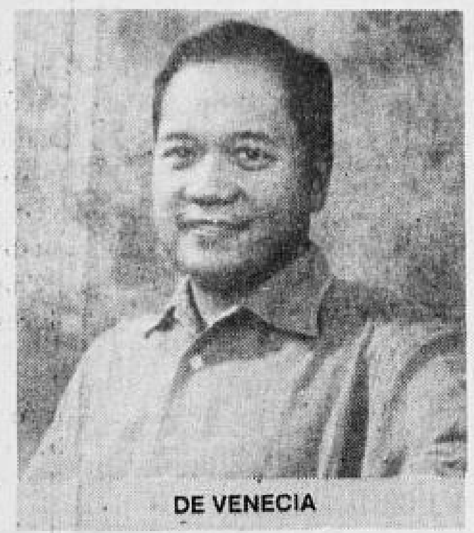
We believe in providing reliability. So we guarantee our service to all our subscribers. The first and only network operator in the country to do so. We are rapidly deploying a network that enables solutions necessary to keep your business in demand. Our commitment to push productivity to the limits.

We have defined broadband. Now experience Broadband and put your business ahead of the competition.
Because a business in demand needs broadband.

Broadband
Philippines
A Business in Demand
Needs Broadband

28th floor IBM Plaza Building, Eastwood City Cyberpark, Quezon City Tel. No.: 913-6868 www.broadbandphilippines.com

# oadband finally takes off in the Philippines.



DE VENECIA

When you look at the traditional telecommunications network, 70 percent of the cost of these networks is spent on diggings in the ground and on setting up cables. In our network we don't have those things. We put a broadband wireless radio on top of a building and invest on that building by cabling in that building and connecting customers in that building to our network. The value proposition there for building owners is we make their buildings broadband-ready.

**Angulo: How would you describe the present telecommunications network we have in the country?**

**De Venecia:** The present telecommunication infrastructure in the Philippines is not broadband but narrow band, because primarily it is for voice or phone calls. I remember when I was first connecting to the Internet, the modem speed I was using was 1200 baud and when it went up to 9.6 kbps, I was able to use the fax. When it went up to 14.4 kbps, I was able to do my e-mail yet it was still very slow. As the band became broader, we got new applications such as surfing the Internet. When we continue to improve the size of the highway, the size of the pipe, we can do more complex things.

That is why we have positioned ourselves to apply best-of-breed technologies to be able to address the expanding needs of corporations in the Philippines. Let's say you want to transfer the engineering design of an entire building, say a 20-megabit file, you'll need at least eight hours to do that using today's telecom infrastructure. Secondly, since our telecom infrastructure is really for voice and not for data, you'll be lucky if you'll be able to complete that process. Sometimes the line just gets dropped and you have to download it again. In our network, we do that task in one minute because the capacity is so vast and broad.

**Angulo: What is your company's focus right now?**

**Nery:** Our aim is to service our corporate customers well. Thus, we are now focused on building the most reliable broadband Internet and data network in the country.

**Angulo: Do you plan to offer your services to households?**

**De Venecia:** Broadband services are more concentrated with the corporate side. Our business model is building-centric, that is, we invest in buildings which house our corporate customers. We are currently deploying our network in Metro Manila, wiring buildings and putting radios on these buildings. We are creating an **e Building community** within our network. We're addressing the corporate market because this is really the driver of our economy. The performance of these companies will bring the economic benefits down to their employees.

**Angulo: Do you think broadband will spur the growth of the Internet in the Philippines?**

**De Venecia:** The growth of the Internet is driven by two things. First is the price of computers. It has not really gone down. If you'll buy a multimedia computer now, you'll have to spend 20-plus thousand or more. With the disposable income of the Filipinos, we're not there yet, unlike our neighbors. So computer penetration in the Philippines has not taken off as fast as in other countries. Second, the telecom infrastructure is not really there. It's there but the quality is really for voice, not for data transmission. In order to drive Internet usage and growth, the proper broadband infrastructure is necessary.

NERY

**Angulo: There are other broadband providers that are coming out lately. What makes your company different?**

**Nery:** It is our belief that technology will continue to improve and that we need to have an ALL-NEW network in place that was designed for broadband from the start. It is not meant to disparage other technologies but we feel that not having to upgrade old networks means a brand new network that is broadband inside and out, a service that grows with the customers needs. It is also our belief that old networks designed for things other than broadband can only be upgraded so much until it hits the limit. You cannot force true broadband into copper infrastructure, which is primarily designed for voice calls. There is only so much copper can do.

In fact, we are so confident about the technologies we are deploying and its reliability that we are willing to provide a guarantee of availability of service to all our customers across the board—a first in the Philippines.

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# OBITUARIES

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**Monday to Sunday**
12:00 noon
Day before publication

## Judge IRINEO "Iring" V. MENDOZA

**Executive RTC Judge, World War II Veteran, Charter President of Sto. Tomas Lion's Club, Member of Mu Kappa Phi and Cursillo in Christianity movement.**

*Peacefully joined his Creator on January 25, 2001 at the age of 73.*

He is survived by his wife **Maria Avecilla Mendoza** and his bereaved children and their spouses **Irineo Jr.** and **Mary Jane**, **Ross** and **Racel**, **Elmer** and **Maricar**, **Norman** and **Lourdes**, **Eric**, **Homer** and **Marvin**; grandchildren **Irma**, **Janina**, **Aileen**, **John Boy**, **Erwin**, **Maxie** and **Isabella**; his sisters **Magdalena**, **Catalina** and **Vicenta**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the family residence in San Juan, Sto. Tomas, Batangas.

Interment will take place on Saturday, February 03, 2001 at the Memorial Park, Sto. Tomas after the 9:00 a.m. Funeral Mass at San Juan Chapel.

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IN MEMORIAM

On the Third Death Anniversary of

## CORAZON R. CUI

On the 1st of February 2001,
her 3rd Death Anniversary, Masses and prayers will be offered at St. Paul's Parish, Richmond, BC, Canada, St. James the Great Parish, Ayala Alabang, Mary Mother of Good Counsel Church, Marcelo Green Village and Our Lady of Beautiful Love Church, Merville Park.

We are very grateful to all who keep our beloved **CORITO** in their memory and continue to pray for her.

***Mackie, Gabby, Rosabel, Carla and Mako***

---

## LUISA LOGAN Vda. de ATABUG

Beloved wife of **JUANITO** (†)

**of Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya and Tuguegarao, Cagayan**

*Peacefully joined her Creator on January 30, 2001*
*at the age of 83.*

Her loving children **Nonie** and **Odette** (†), **Amy** and **Romy Ocampo**, **Ramon** and **Eleanor**, **Nini** (†), **Sonia**, **Cora**, **Johnny**, **Lito** and **Les**; grandchildren **Ari**, **Armi**, **Liza**, **Marilou** and **Joseph**, **Grace**, **Mike** and **Betcha**, **Roma**, **Jolou**, **Ria**, **Jomar**, **Joebert**, **Joseph**, **Angelo**, **Harry**, **Fatima**, **Raffy**, **Jerome**; and great grandchild **Joanne**; sisters and brothers-in-law request the readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City.

Interment will be on Sunday, February 4, 2001 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City after the 8:00 a.m. Holy Mass.

---

## Mary Ann "El" Quidayan de la Cruz

*Peacefully joined her Creator on January 30, 2001.*

Her remains lie in state at her residence in Bay, Laguna.

Mass will be held on Saturday, February 3, 2001 at 2:00 p.m. at the Saint Augustine Parish Church, Bay, Laguna.

Interment will be at the Bay Catholic Cemetery, immediately after the Mass.

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In Loving Memory
on the
First Death Anniversary
of

## Jesus Mejia Gonzalez

**23 October 1945 - 01 February 2000**

His wife **Josie**; children **Cookie** and **Alex San Diego**, **Che** and **Margot**, **Jay**, **Justin** and **Chimmy**; grandchildren **Maxine**, **Gabby** and **Miguel**; brothers and sister and in-laws wish to thank all our relatives and friends who offered their condolences and prayers during our moment of grief.

**MASSES OFFERED**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Santuario de San Jose Parish**<br>Greenhills, San Juan | 6:15 a.m. |
| **St. Andrew, The Apostle Parish**<br>Kalayaan, Makati City | 6:30 a.m. |
| **St. Francis of Assissi**<br>Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong | 7:00 a.m. |
| **Mary the Queen Parish**<br>Greenhills, San Juan | 7:00 a.m. |
| **Mount Carmel**<br>New Manila, Quezon City | 7:00 a.m. |
| **Our Lady of Remedies**<br>Malate, Manila | 7:00 a.m. |
| **Santuario de San Antonio**<br>Forbes Park, Makati City | 12:15 nn |
| **Christ the King Parish**<br>Greenmeadows Avenue, Quezon City | 6:00 p.m. |
| **St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Parish**<br>Magallanes, Makati City | 6:00 p.m. |
| **St. John Don Bosco Parish Church**<br>Pasay Road, Makati City | 6:00 p.m. |

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MESSAGE OF THANKS

We, the family of the late

## HELEN GANTIOQUI MORENO

*who joined her Creator on January 24, 2001*

wish to convey our sincerest and most heartfelt gratitude to all those who offered Masses and prayers; spiritual bouquets; sent flowers and notes of sympathy; extended support; visited and kept vigil; attended the services and funeral rites; and those who in countless ways condoled, helped and comforted us in the hour of our deepest sorrow.

---

## ALICE G. ANG

**of Kalibo, Aklan**

*Passed away in the Grace of our Lord on January 29, 2001 at the age of 51.*

Her bereaved children **Stephen**, **Shiela** and **Joanne**; other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at Chapel E, La Funeraria Paz, Inc., G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Cremation will be held at Chinese Crematory on February 4, 2001 at 11:00 AM.

---

## Ma. Linda (Lehnee) P. Fernandez

*Died in the Grace of our Lord on January 30, 2001 at the age of 47.*

Her bereaved husband Arsenio, children Arlene, Alexis, Aris, Aaron and Alistaire, grandchildren Alexandra, Diane and Angel, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Interment will be on Sunday, February 4, 2001 at the Manila North Cemetery after 9:00 a.m. Mass.

---

*"To be absent from the body is to be present in the Lord."*
2 Corinthians 5:8

## ZOSIMO PIO ROA y RABAGO "IMOK"

**of**
**Cebu City and Cagayan de Oro City**

**Born : September 5, 1952**
**Died : January 29, 2001**

Beloved son of **Pio I. Roa** (†) and **Jacinta Lydia Rabago** (†)
and stepson of **Flora Borromeo** (†).
A loving brother to **Nanette, Ruby and Teddy** (†)
A wonderful uncle to **Patrick and Kristine, John, Nicole, Jopi and Flora**
**Papa Imok** to **Partricia and Jared**

A thoughtful, kind, generous and selfless friend to all those who know him and whose lives he touched. A proud member of the Roa Clan. Renaissance man.

Imok's mortal remains lie at the Cosmopolitan Funeral Homes, Nivel Hills, Lahug, Cebu City.

His body will arrive in Cagayan de Oro City on February 2, 2001 and will lie in state at the Cosmopolitan Funeral Homes (Cagayan de Oro).

Interment will be on Sunday, February 4, 2001 at Greenhills Memorial Park after the 9:00 AM Funeral Mass at the Greenhills Chapel.

---

We announce with deep sorrow,
the demise of

## TAY CHAY HAN

## (Delfin Tay)

who joined his Creator
on January 30, 2001

He is survived by wife **Dorothy**

Children
**Johnny and Luz, Chato and Mickey, Lorenzo and Jean, Richard, Suzette, Michelle and Peter**

Grandchildren
**Anna Liza, Johnina, Joey and Jonah**

Great Grandchild
**Hannah Estrella**

Brothers and Sisters
**Auring, Rudy and Sally, Rey and Evelyn, Angie Leopoldo and Carmen, Nene and Tony Alvarez**

His remains lie in state at the Immaculate Heart Chapel of the National Shrine of the Sacred Heart, No. 4 Dao Street, Makati City (across YMCA).

Interment will be on Friday, February 2, 2001 at the Manila Memorial Park in Parañaque City after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

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MESSAGE OF THANKS

We, the family of the late

## JOSE (ONDOY PEPITO) A. CLARIN, JR.

*Who joined his Creator on December 27, 2000*

sincerely convey our deepest gratitude and appreciation to all those who offered prayers, sent flowers, visited and kept vigil, attended the funeral rites and condoled with us in our moment of grief.

---

## Renato (Junjo) Urquiola, Jr.

*Died in the Grace of our Lord in Queen Mary's Hospital, Hongkong on January 27, 2001.*

His loving wife **Gina Giron**; son **Arthur Douglas**; mother **Beatriz S.A. Urquiola**; relatives and friends request prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

Body lies in state at the Chapel of Holy Redeemer Parish, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be at the Loyola Cemetery, Parañaque on Sunday after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

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## HRC MEMORIAL SERVICES

ANNOUNCEMENT BOARD

| Name of Deceased | Viewing Place | Interment Date |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Primitivo M. Santiago | Lot 13H Blk. 20 Southwest Ipil Victorino III Marikina Heights Marikina City | February 3, 2001 |

For our services, please call Tel. Nos. **948-0233** and **948-0374**, Telefax **948-0265** located at **Loyola Memorial Park Administration Building, Tañong, Marikina City**. We are sure we can help you.

# INQUIRER TRiViA

By BONG BARRAMEDA

## Horsey dozy

**Q.** Can horses really sleep while standing?

**A.** Horses have the ability to sleep while standing. Their legs are provided with muscular mechanisms which cause them to lock, as it were, and permit the animals to rest somewhat as if they are standing on stilts. When a standing horse is unconscious there is no direct brain control over the muscles essential to the maintenance of an erect posture. The muscles in the legs, back and chest are controlled by the reflex actions of the spinal cord. In a similar manner a bird sleeping on swaying limb maintains a reflex balance while its consciousness is in abeyance. Horses sleeping while standing occasionally, though rarely, fall down. More often certain muscles in the forelegs relax suddenly and the horse knuckles over on to the fetlocks (tufts of hair on the back of the horse's legs) and then immediately catches itself.

**For the Record.** Horses sometimes go on for months without lying down. It is astonishing how little sleep they require. When horses lie down to sleep their eyes usually remain open or partly open, and they sleep so lightly that they are awakened by the faintest sound. They seldom lie long in the same position because their great weight cramps their muscles and prevents the under lung from functioning.

***Ooops!*** It isn't the brain feeling pain when you have a headache. The brain cannot feel pain—it has no pain receptors. The pain you feel in ypur head is caused by receptors in structures outside the brain, most commonly blood vessels or the covering of the brain (dura mater).

**WORD WATCH**

**Kabesa** : from the Spanish *cabeza,* 'head.'

PDI – February 1, 2001

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Republic of the Philippines
**Department of Education, Culture, and Sports**
Third Elementary Education Project

## INVITATION FOR BIDS

Date: January 29, 2001
Loan No.: 4108-PH
IFB No.: PISU-CO/192001

1. The Government of the Republic of the Philippines (through the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS)) has received a loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) in various currencies towards the financing of Third Elementary Education Project (TEEP). It is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments under the contract for supply and delivery of Office Equipment to Selected Division and District Offices in the Philippines.
2. The Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS), Project Implementation Support Unit (PISU) for Third Elementary Education Project (TEEP), now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the supply and delivery of office equipment.
3. For the purpose of this bidding, eligible bidders shall be those who have experience in the supply or selling and distribution or delivery of office equipment to remote areas in a developing country like the Philippines.
4. Interested eligible bidders may inspect the bidding documents at or obtain further information from the Office of PBAC for Foreign Assisted Projects, Second Floor, Rizal Building I, DECS Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City, Tel. Nos. (632) 636-6542 or 632-1361 local 2115 or 2085, Telefax No. (632) 635-3762.
5. A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by interested bidders starting January 29, 2001 upon submission of letter of intent to the above and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of One Thousand Pesos (P1,000.00).
6. The provisions in the Instructions to Bidders and in the General Conditions of Contract are the provisions of the World Bank *Standard Bidding Documents: Procurement of Goods.*
7. Bids must be delivered to the Bulwagan ng Karunungan, Rizal Building I, Department of Education, Culture and Sports, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City, Philippines, on or before 10:00 AM on March 7, 2001 and must be accompanied by a security of two (2) percent of total bid price.
8. Bids will be opened in the presence of bidders' representatives who choose to attend at 10:00 AM on March 7, 2001 at Bulwagan ng Karunungan, Rizal Building I, Department of Education, Culture and Sports, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City.
9. Prior to bid opening, a pre-bid conference will be held on February 14, 2001, 10:00 AM, at the address indicated in paragraph 8.

(Sgd.) **RAMON C. BACANI**
Undersecretary and
Vice-Chairman, DECS-PBAC

(PDI – Jan. 30, Feb 1 & 3, 2001)

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Republic of the Philippines
Department of Finance
**BUREAU OF CUSTOMS**
**PORT OF MANILA**
Customs District II-A
South Harbor, Manila

January 30, 2001

## NOTICE OF SALE

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 2601 and 2607 of the Tariff and Customs Code of the Philippines, and in view of the fact that the hereunder listed articles are liable to perish, will be wasted or will depreciate greatly in value, there will be a **PUBLIC AUCTION SALES** (Sealed Biddings) on **FEBRUARY 1, 8, 15 & 22, 2001** at 1:30 PM at the Office of Auction and Cargo Disposal Division, Room No. 304, Customhouse Bldg., South Harbor, Port Area, Manila.

"Sugar, Textile Matèrials, Used Motor Vehicles/Buses, Medical/Dental Equipments, Asstd. Rubber Shoes, Electronics, Used Fishing Boat, Surplus items, Tools and Equipment for Drilling Rig Type SPJ-300, Velvetol Isopropanol, Singing Angel (Figurine), Cassette Head Cleaner, Fiberglass Tubes, Used Tires, Used Motorcycles/Scooters, Towel, Used Household appliances, Rice Sticks, Office/School Supplies/ Teletubies Toys, Aluminum Foil and some other interesting items."

CASH BOND REQUIRED: P10,000.00

For particulars, please see or contact the Chief, Atty. REYNALDO P. AVELINO of Auction and Cargo Disposal Division, Room No. 304, Customhouse Bldg., South Harbor, Port Area, Manila. Tel. # 527-80-51 Loc. 437.

(Sgd.) **ATTY. REYNALDO S. NICOLAS**
*District Collector*
*Port of Manila*

IMPORTANT:

Pursuant to Customs Administrative Order No. 3-94 approved on March 18, 1994, as implemented by CMO No. 12-94 dated April 7, 1994, a Registration Fee of One Thousand (P1,000.00) Pesos is required to be eligible to participate in the Auction Sale.

(PDI – Feb. 1, 2001)

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**National Power Corporation**

## INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID
## AD NO. PD 2001-07

**Bidding Date : February 19, 2001 – 10:00 a.m.**

| | |
|---|---|
| 2001-08-01 | GRINDING WHEEL/TAPE, polyester film, acrylic |
| 2001-08-02 | MAGNETIC PARTICLE TESTING MATERIALS in aerosol can |
| 2001-08-03 | COMPUTER PERIPHERALS (CPU, etc.) |
| 2001-08-04 | SAFETY MATERIALS (Respirator, Ear Plugs, Working Gloves, etc.) |
| 2001-08-05 | * OFFICE/COMPUTER SUPPLIES (Bond/Recording Paper, Mailing Envelope, Storage Box, Ink Cartridges, Floppy Disk, etc.) |
| 2001-08-06 | SERVICES: Gear Cutting of (spiral) Bevel Gear, 27/28 teeth |

* (To be purchased thru Open-Ended Purchase Order for a period of six months starting April 2001).

Interested parties are invited to prequalify and to submit sealed bids on the above to be opened publicly at the Sampaguita Rm. (Ground Floor, Bldg. 2 NPC-OBC, Quezon Avenue cor. Agham Road, Diliman, Quezon City.

Accreditation forms can be obtained from Mondays thru Fridays at the Accreditation and Bidding Support Services, Materials Management Department, Ground Floor, Bldg. 2 upon payment of P50.00, submission of company's TIN and proof of listing at the telephone directory. Deadline for submission of duly accomplished forms on **February 7, 2001.**

Bidding documents available on **February 02, 2001** upon payment of P50.00 which is non-refundable, presentation of original Certificate of Accreditation and supplier's number (DCE). **Last day of issuance of bidding documents **February 12, 2001.**

Issuance of accreditation forms and bidding documents mornings only, 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. For inquiries, please call no. 921-2574.

The Corporation reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any defect therein and accept the offer most advantageous to the Corporation.

**MATERIALS MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT**
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(PDI Feb 1 & 2 2001)

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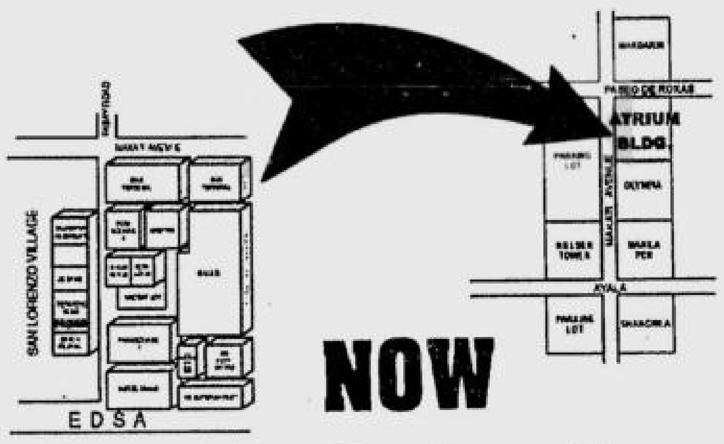

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NATIONAL CLASSIFIEDS

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# OBITUARIES

## Fortunato P. Aspera

*Peacefully joined our Lord*
*on January 27, 2001 at the age of 59.*

His remains lie in state at Holy Trinity Memorial Chapel, Sucat, Parañaque.

Interment will be on Saturday, February 23, 2001 at Loyola Memorial Park, Parañaque after 9:00 a.m. Mass at the Immaculate Conception Parish, Gatchalian Subdivision.

---

"For God
so loved
the world,
that He gave
His only
begotten Son,
that whoever
believes in Him
shall not perish
but have
everlasting
life."
John 3:16

---

✝

## JOSEPH "JOEY" ABRINA SARMIENTO

OF QUEZON CITY AND LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

**Passed away in the Grace of our Lord**

**ON JANUARY 24, 2001 AT THE AGE OF 44.**

His loving parents **Octavio** and **Nora Sarmiento**; brothers and sisters **Rita, Edwin** and **Nina Silang, Marvin** and **Anne Abesamis, Sr. Mary Jean** of the Child Jesus, **Raymund** and **Anna, Deanne, Richard**; nieces and nephews **Nicole, Therese, Nadine, Catherine, Andrew, Anton**; uncles and aunts, cousins and friends mourn his passing and request the pious readers to offer prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains will lie in state at La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, on February 2-4, 2001.

Cremation will be on Sunday, February 4, at La Funeraria Paz Crematory, after the 8:00 a.m. Mass.

---

## JULIETA CRUZ ALEJANDRINO

*Passed away at the age of 76*
*on Tuesday, January 30, 2001.*

She is survived by her husband **Adolfo**; brothers **Vicente, Augusto** and **Hermes**; sisters **Herminia, Fe** and **Lily**; children **Virginia, Tony, Mike, Viki, Jake** and **Shirley, Isa, Rico, Nana** and **Lyndon**; grandchildren **Rica** and **Chicklet, Carlo, Carla, Erin, Casa, Clea, Caila, Carisa, Amanda, Kathryn, Paquito** and **Roberta**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City.

Cremation follows after the 7:00 a.m. Mass on Saturday, February 3, 2001.

---

*Psalm 62:2-3*
*Only in God my soul at rest*
*from Him comes my salvation*
*He is only my rock & my salvation, my*
*Stronghold; I shall not be disturbed at all.*

## Ramon Gana Francisco

**July 29, 1953 - January 30, 2001**

*Peacefully went home to his Creator and blissfully joined his beloved father,*
*HIGINO R. FRANCISCO*

His bereaved mother **Nory Gana Francisco**; loving wife **Mary Ann Singson**; children **Joanna, Stephanie, Susanne & Janine**; brothers, and sisters & in-laws **Lucy & Bambi Borromeo, Eddie & Nenet Urrutia, Ping & Carol Poblete, Nina Imperial** (✝), **Freddie & Thelma Melevo, Ludy & Marlo Gutierrez, Nonoy & Ruby Mañalac, Susan & Frankie Luna, Gina & Jem Yap, Geng & Bing Cruz, Neni & Mars Marasigan**; nephews, nieces, uncles, aunties and cousins request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the St. Martin Chapel, Santo Domingo Church, Quezon City.

Interment will take place on Saturday, February 3, 2001 after the 2:00 p.m. Mass at Family Mausoleum, North Cemetery.

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for free.

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## EX-MAYOR ANGILEO P. PAUIG

**of Enrile, Cagayan**

*Peacefully joined his Creator on Sunday, January 28, 2001*
*at the age of 97.*

His loving wife **Adoracion** (✝); children **Lourdes, Jonas & Dulce, Elena, Angeleo Jr.** (✝) **& Norma, Wilhelmina & Pascual** (✝), **Nicolas & Paula, Ex-Mayor Domingo & Vilma**; grandchildren, great-grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at his residence at No. 7 Pauig St., Centro, Enrile, Cagayan.

Interment will be on Saturday, February 3, 2001 at Enrile, Cagayan.

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### LOT

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### LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is given of the extrajudicial settlement of estate w/ sale executed by the heirs of Dominga S. Tingson on 1/15/01 before Notary Public Atty Elsa V. Perlas of Pasig City per Doc 113, Page 89, Book XCIV Series of 2001.
(PDI - Feb 1,8 & 15,2001)

### NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is hereby given of the lost S2 Lic. 9686R98-1311 in the name of EDGARDO M. AGUINALDO, M.D.

### PERSONAL

CIVIL WEDDING/SM 5280747

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May the most Sacred Heart of Jesus be praised, blessed, loved, adored and glorified throughout the whole world now and forever. Amen.
Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. Pray for us.
St. Jude, worker of miracles, helper for the helpless, pray for us.
Say nine times a day for nine days. Prayer will be answered by the eighth day, it has never failed.
Thank you very much, Most Sacred Heart of Jesus and St. Jude, for favor granted.

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THANK YOU HOLY SPIRIT

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Please be informed of our new classified advertising rates effective **February 1, 2001 issue.**

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FEBRUARY 1, 2001
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
LIFESTYLE
Tastes
C-1
CHELO BANAL-FORMOSO, Editor

Dunkin' Darling Donuts
P28
DUNKIN' DONUTS
"Pasalubong ng Bayan"
See print ads for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit no. 0142, series of 2001.

# There's life for leftovers

Even when the economy turns around, it wouldn't hurt to be frugal gourmets and smart consumers. Here are some tips on how to handle and recycle food

BY VANGIE BAGA-REYES

**THERE'S a downside to cooking that the good old cook book can't teach you. After the meals are served and the feast is over, you must now deal with leftover food. How do you prevent it from spoiling? How do you maintain the flavor?**

In other words, how will you avoid serving a "*pangat*," as in "*pangatlong init*" (third re-heating)? Indeed, there's a whole lot of fuss that follows the cooking and the eating of food.

But don't despair. There are unwritten rules on what to do with leftovers that culinary expert Dorothy Ferreria happily shares with us.

There's a new President, there are promises that the economy will turn robust, the peso is slowly recovering and we are all hopeful. But we must continue with the belt-tightening for now, and even when things turn around, it wouldn't hurt to be frugal gourmets and smart consumers. So here are some food storing tips

THERE'S/ p.C5

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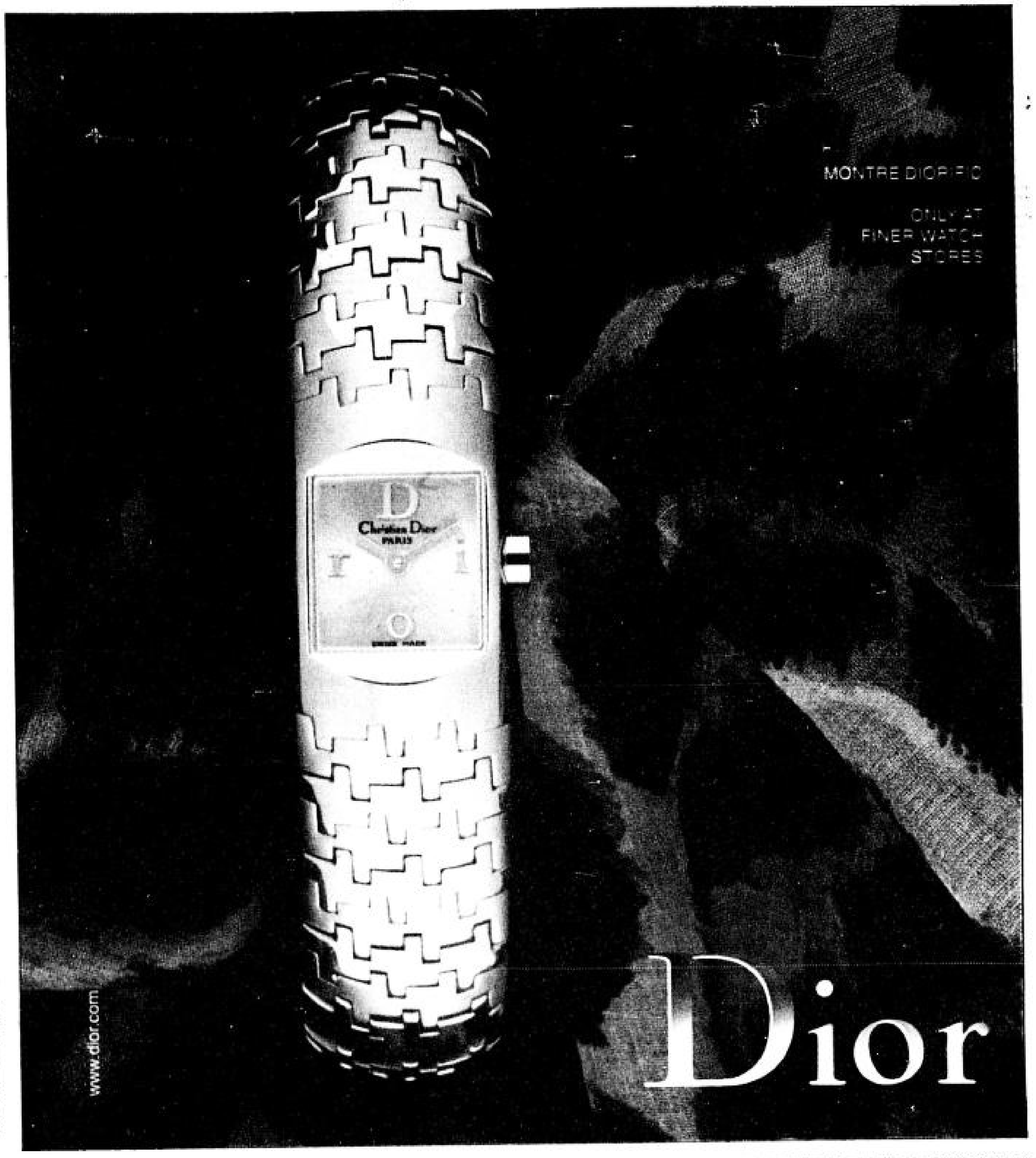

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P28
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## CLEAN AIR RESTO

# Italian food–fast!

BY CATHY BABAO GUBALLA

TWO of America's most popular dining concepts finally come to Manila—the Italian family restaurant and the fast-food outlet. Fazoli's, the newest Italian fast-food to hit Metro Manila, makes its first home in the bustling C5 district, the pioneer restaurant row in fast developing Eastwood City.

Fazoli's mother company, based in Lexington, Kentucky, partnered with Real Fast Inc. in the Philippines when it decided to venture out of the United States and explore the international market. Fazoli's Philippines is its very first international branch. Real Fast, Inc. is a subsidiary of the same company that brought in Kentucky Fried Chicken and Mr. Donut.

### Fine dining ambiance

Reasonable prices, quality food and quick service are the hallmarks of every Fazoli's restaurant. However, the atmosphere doesn't say quick serve at all. Its two-storey building in the Eastwood complex is imposing and the interiors exude a warm and friendly atmosphere. The décor conveys the warmth of a full-service, casual dining experience. From the murals on the wall to the jars of oil and baskets of peppers, to the savory aroma that greets you as you walk in, Fazoli's is clearly a sensory overload of the best in Italian fast food.

In 1998, the US magazine Restaurants and Institutions ranked Fazoli's No. 1 overall in the quick-service category.

Fazoli's Manila prides itself in being a nonsmoking establishment, but smokers are welcome except that they have to stay in the balcony where the fresh air and a great view of Eastwood City come free. The only downside to this restaurant is the flight of steep stairs one has to climb to the second floor. Mommies and caregivers need to pay close attention to their little ones lest, heaven forbid, they go rolling down the stairs! Better yet, seat them close to the mural.

### Value for money

Fazoli's serves a wide array of food at very reasonable prices. In addition to this, Fazoli's provides the diner with a delicious alternative to standard fast-food fare—Spaghetti, Fettuccine Alfredo, Lasagna and Submarino sandwiches are oven-baked to order. All dine-in guests are served free, unlimited servings of freshly baked, buttery breadsticks during the meal.

Pizzarino's, a favorite of the office crowd and young families, is Fazoli's take on the classic pizza. Fun to eat and delicious, it is topped with pepperoni, peppers, mushrooms and sausage depending on the flavor you order. Even better is its price—very affordable at P110 for a whole portion of Bacon Cheeseburger Pizzarino or P55 for a half order of Primo Pepperoni Pizzarino.

According to Shiela Rivera, area manager for Fazoli's, their topsellers are the Sampler Platter—a feast for people with a passion for pasta as it is composed of Lasagna, Fettuccine Alfredo and Spaghetti with Meat Sauce—all on one plate and priced at P100 per order! For those who don't want a pasta overload, there is Baked Spaghetti Parmesan loaded with cheese and baked to golden bubbly perfection at P95 per order.

Pizza lovers have four variants to choose from—Cheese, Pepperoni, Hawaiian and Supreme. Prices vary from P325 to P430. The Supreme pizza loaded with pepperoni, ham, pineapple, black olives, bell pepper and mushroom is filling enough to feed a family of four with hearty appetite.

For weight-watchers, there are two salads to choose from, and the Chicken and Pasta Caesar Salad at P65 per order is a winner. Pair that off with a bowl of Minestrone soup at P30 per order and you're all set. Remember, the bread sticks come free.

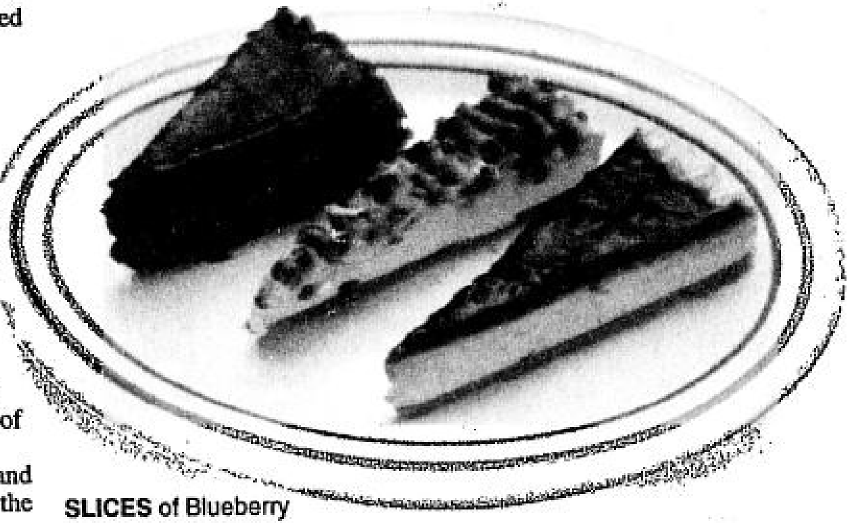
Fazoli's also boasts of luscious desserts—slices of Blueberry Cheesecake, Turtle Cheesecakes (sprinkled with walnuts and drizzled with caramel sauce), Tiramisu and Chocolate cake at P50-55 per slice.

### For families

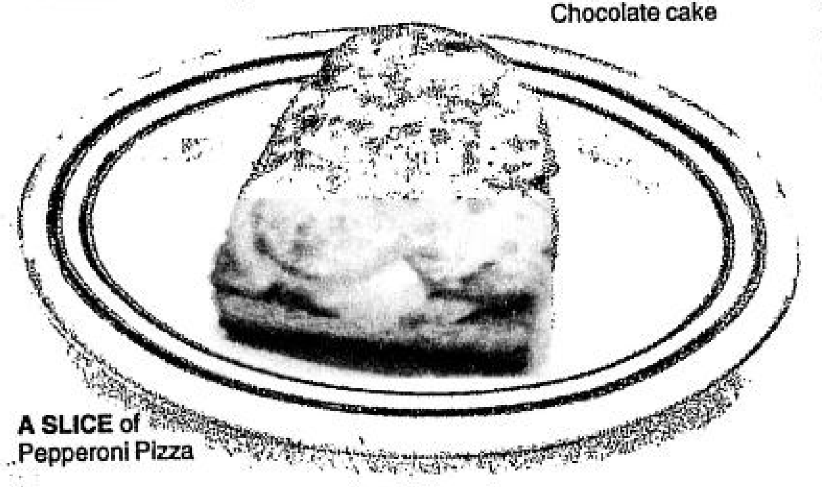
Fazoli's makes for an ideal family restaurant as the place is smoke-free. There's an adequate number of high chairs, a small Japanese pond in front of the restaurant with plump Koi happily swimming and keeping the kids fascinated. For the time being, there is a small circular plaza across the street where parents can walk around to let the pasta settle and the children can frolic. In the evenings, tiny firefly lights flickering from the trees make a pretty sight.

*Fazoli's is located within the Eastwood City complex on the C5 strip in Libis, QC.*

**SAMPLER** Platter



**SLICES** of Blueberry Cheesecake, Turtle Cheesecake and Chocolate cake



**A SLICE** of Pepperoni Pizza

FAZOLI'S · FAZOLI'S · FAZOLI'S · FAZOLI'S · FAZOLI'S

**QUICK** service despite the queues

PHOTOS: JOHNNY VILLENA

# The sunny side of chicken

BY ANNE A. JAMBORA

> A survey resulted in eight of 10 people saying they preferred Sunroast chicken over others in the market

IT'S a chicken that promises to bring the fresh, sunny feeling of an outdoor meal in Old MacDonald's farm. Barely three months in the market, this new chick in town is already pecking its way into the competitive world of roasted chickens—even without the usual media fanfare and advertisements.

"Sunroast Chicken only uses freshly killed chicken, not frozen," boasts Neil K. Streeter, executive vice president and chief operating officer of Asia Food Franchising Corp., a subsidiary of RFM Corp. Asia Food, naturally, buys its chicken from Swift.

Sunroast Chicken is Streeter's new baby, after Little Caesar's and Dairy Queen. The chicken is marinated in a special, secret recipe for 30-72 hours—or an average of 50 hours—in imported herbs and spices, before it is roasted golden red. The result is a tender, sweet meat with interestingly chewy skin. "You can eat the chicken all the way to the bones," he says. And the sauce? Yes, they do have it but the chicken is so flavorful you won't need it. Really.

Although Streeter says producing Sunroast Chicken is expensive (just how expensive he didn't say), it sells for only P198 (whole), P105 (half) and P60 (quarter). They also sell what is called a Quarter Meal—quarter chicken, sauce and rice—at P68. Sunroast Chicken is exclusively available at all Little Caesar's branches. (For delivery, a 10-percent delivery charge will be added.)

**NEIL** K. Streeter

### By volume

Streeter believes everyone should be able to enjoy Sunroast Chicken, and so it should provide a good value to the average Filipino's pocket. So how does Asia Food profit from Sunroast Chicken? "We operate by volume—the more chicken we sell, the more money we make," he says. In fact, even with the rise and fall of the dollar that caused the price of chicken to fluctuate as well, Sunroast Chicken's selling price has consistently remained the same. With an average of 50,000 chickens sold every month, and slowly but steadily rising, that shouldn't be a problem.

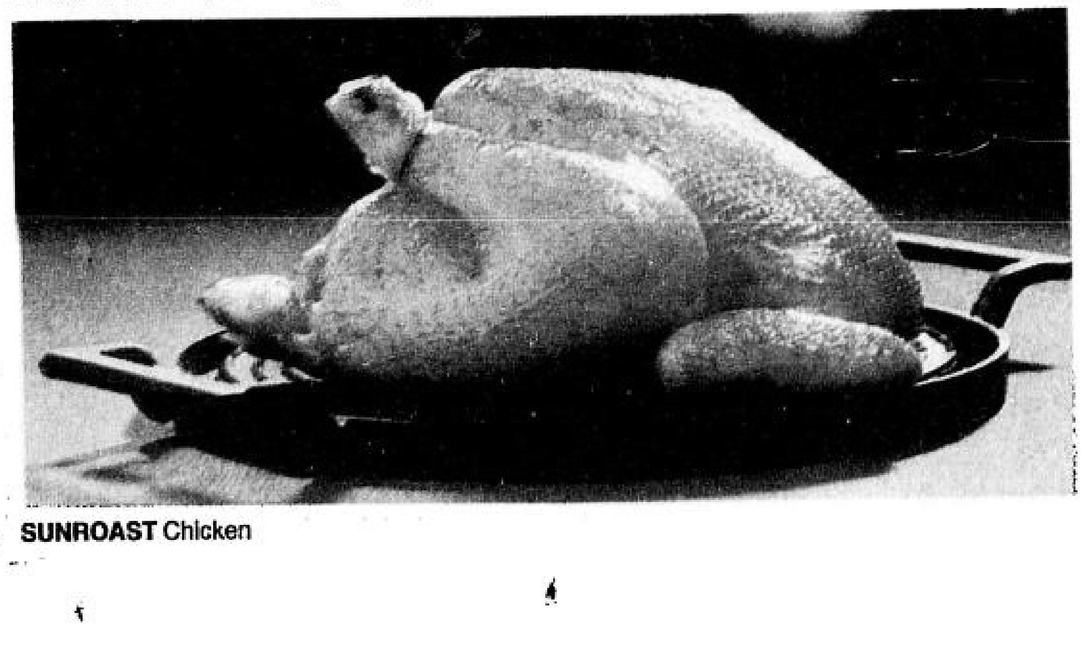
But why choose chicken among other food products? "Chicken is the No. 1 fast-food item in the Philippines," he says. Indeed, your neighborhood streets won't be the same without the stalls selling aromatic roasted chicken, and your next-door *carinderia* is bound to have chicken in its menu.

To have an accurate pulse of the market, Asia Food, with AC Nielsen, conducted a survey on how Sunroast Chicken would fare in the market against other roasted chicken brands. The result was flattering, to say the least—eight out of 10 people preferred Sunroast Chicken. "We are very proud of this," Streeter says.

Except for the Quarter Meal, Streeter says they have yet to create a Sunroast Chicken combo meal with, say, Little Caesar's pizza. "We want Sunroast Chicken to stand on its own feet first because it might lose its identity," he says. But not to worry, though, as combo meals will probably be available in the last quarter of this year.

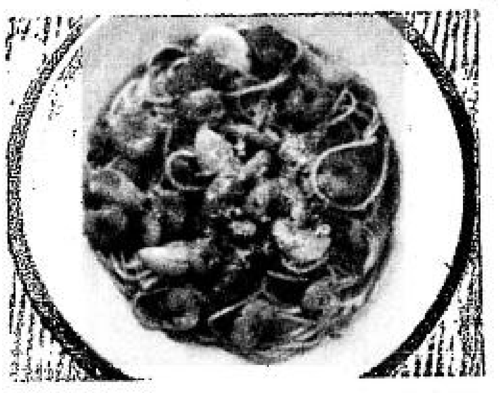
Aside from having combo meals available in the future, Streeter says they also plan to create Sunroast Chicken packages for homes, schools and offices. "Our untapped market are the dine-in customers as 99 percent usually order pizza," he says. He says Sunroast Chicken is very popular with delivery services.

Sunroast Chicken is locally produced—conceptualized and made in the Philippines by Asia Food's Research and Development Group headed by Vicky Santiago. "This is a Filipino product. You won't find this anywhere in the world," he says. However, Asia Food is already thinking of marketing Sunroast Chicken in Asia in the future. The rest of the world will have to wait.

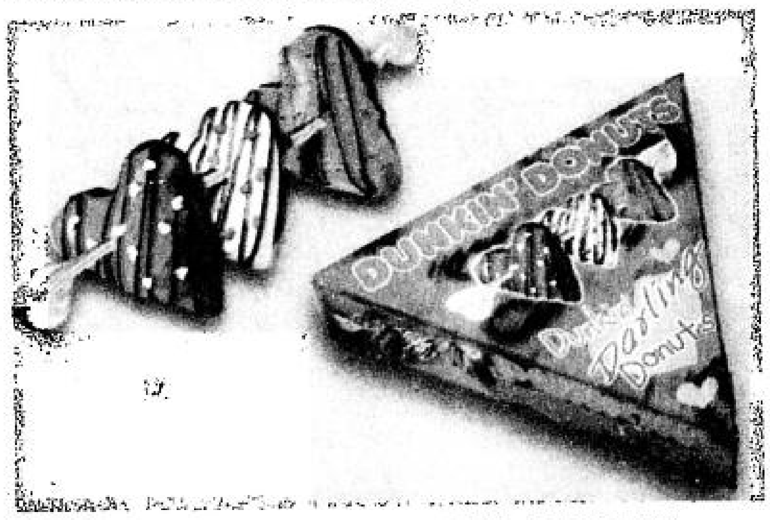


**SUNROAST** Chicken

**BRAVO** offers a special promo. Sample a plate of antipasti Gamberi in Salsa Rosa, Insalata de Mari and Insalata Mista to start a two-course meal and polish it with a sinful dessert. Call 850-3708 and 3033-508. Bravo is located at the Festival Mall, Alabang and Nakpil Street, Malate.



**DON** Henrico's adds a hot and fiery twist to the usual spaghetti with its new concoction dubbed as Chili Garlic Shrimp in Olive Oil Pasta. This delightful fare combines spicy shrimps, basil leaves and tomatoes cooked in chili garlic olive oil sauce and sprinkled with Parmesan cheese. Chili Garlic Shrimp in Olive Oil Pasta is one of Don Henrico's latest pasta dishes which include Grand Emperor's Pasta, Indian Curry Pasta, Tomato-Basil Spaghetti and Spicy Tuna and Walnuts in Olive Oil.



### DARLING DONUTS IN RED, WHITE AND PINK

THE DUNKIN' Darling Donuts are three heart-shaped, half-dipped chocolate doughnuts for only P28! These unique Valentine fancies are topped with heart and rainbow sprinkles to make them more special. Even the choco frosting is made extraordinary because the Dunkin' Darling Donuts come in red, white and pink choco. The Dunkin' Darling Donuts come in a lovely Valentine-inspired box—great for your family and loved ones! Available at any of the participating Dunkin' Donuts outlets until Feb. 18.

ORBITZ
Pearl Shakes

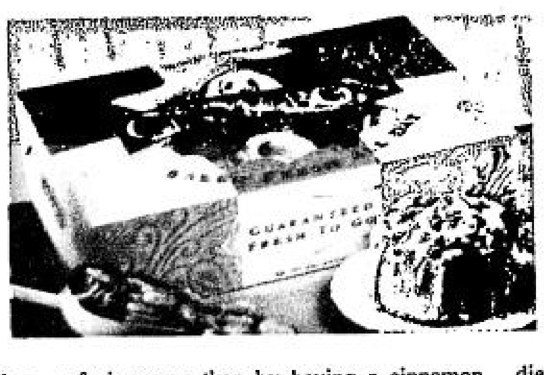
### ORBITZ GOES TO DAVAO

ORBITZ has invaded Davao City by opening six branches in the city and two more branches in the nearby provinces of Davao del Norte and Davao del Sur. The Orbitz Pearl Shakes Team with Rico Yan launched their newly opened branches in Davao City. Photo shows Michelle Chang, president; Joel Tuquib, vice president and Rico Yan, marketing director.

# Break it down with a cinnamon

DIABETICS, rejoice. According to the US Department of Agriculture, there is now a superbly delicious excuse to cheat on your strict, bland and uninteresting diet. In the December issue of Men's Health magazine, a recent study shows ground cinnamon, not the powdered instant flavoring but the authentic ground ones, activates the production of glucose-burning enzymes and aids insulin effectiveness. Insulin, as most diabetics know by heart, is the hormone secreted by the pancreas, which breaks down blood sugars for better absorption by the body. When one has diabetes, the body either doesn't make enough insulin or can't use its own insulin as well as it should. And this USDA study shows cinnamon made insulin 20 times more capable of breaking down blood sugars.

And what better way to get your dose of cinnamon than by having a cinnamon roll? Better yet, have a Cinnabon—the "World's Most Famous Cinnamon Rolls" made available in the Philippines exclusively by Canelle Food Corporation. Canelle holds the largest Cinnabon franchise agreement with AFC Enterprises Company of Atlanta, USA.



Cinnabon has been known worldwide for its use of the Legendary Makara Cinnamon, found only in the high mountains of Indonesia. This cinnamon is very carefully prepared and put through an exclusive temperature-controlled grinding process that preserves the precious volatile oils and enhances its sweet cinnamon taste and aroma. So the delectable flavor is retained, as well as the health benefits of this wonderful and versatile spice.

So go ahead and put one over your diet. There is no better and more delicious way to sin than by indulging your sweet tooth and still manage to keep your blood sugar level down. Welcome news, indeed, both for you and your doctor. And because it's a Cinnabon, you may even want to share it with the good doctor!

# Enhancing the flavor of pesto sauce

ASK NORA

Nora V. Daza

CECILE de Jesus asked for a pesto sauce recipe. Thanks to many herb gardens, making one's own pesto sauce is now possible. Whenever I can, I ask a specialist, an Italian this time, to give her inputs on the making of pesto sauce.

To make a good pesto sauce, it is traditional to use a mortar and pestle for this gives a sauce that is smooth but has texture. If one uses a blender or a food processor, one has to be vigilant. Overblending will give a smooth sauce with little texture, and the sauce will be thinner.

These days, creativity in cooking is practiced as never before. So, I am giving here a basic recipe. You can add other ingredients that will enhance the flavor for you and your guests.

Usually, sweet basil is used. Get fresh ones. Remove any wilted or brown edges and wipe basil leaves clean. As for cheeses added by Italian connoisseurs, Parmesan is used, but Pecorino Romano is added as well. Pecorino Romano gives a slightly sharper flavor to the sauce than Parmesan cheese alone.

I know this will sound sacrilegious to others, but when I do not have Parmesan in my kitchen and I have *queso de bola*, I grate that and it gives a pretty good product. But it depends on your palate. You are the final arbiter.

Regarding grated cheese, I had a neighbor who had an Italian food shop and take-out counter in Paris. I always saw him cut out a piece of Parmesan and grate it into the dish he was preparing. This is more convenient, but if the grated cheese is not used at once, it will become dry.

### Pesto sauce

4-5 cloves of garlic, peeled
3 c fresh basil, wiped clean
¼ c freshly grated Parmesan cheese
¼ c grated Pecorino cheese
½-¾ c extra-virgin olive oil
Salt
500 g dry pasta, usually linguini or spaghettini

Pound garlic and basic leaves in a mortar and with pestle until the two are well blended. Add the cheeses and pound until they are well integrated, too. Gradually pour the extra-virgin olive oil, very slowly, drop by drop, while continuing to pound the paste. The result should be a sauce that is thick enough but which when added to the pasta will coat the pasta well. Add salt to taste. Remember that you will be adding pasta so you can make your pesto a little salty. This is one dish to which you can add grated cheese.

To prepare pasta properly, always cook the pasta in a large saucepan of boiling water. Have a long wooden spoon for stirring. Put salt and a tablespoon of oil to the boiling water. Then allow the uncooked pasta to slide into the boiling water, preventing it from sticking together or sticking to the bottom of the cooking pan.

Cover the pan and allow water to boil.

As soon as the pasta becomes al dente (or firm), pour it onto a colander. Be careful! The heat from the pan can burn you.

After a few seconds, give the colander sharp taps to drain water from the pasta. Toss in the pesto sauce while the pasta is still hot. See to it that the pasta is coated with the sauce. Serve.

* * *

Ever since I started this column, I've been going to wet markets regularly and enjoy it tremendously. I really do as much research as I can for there are so many new products—vegetables, fruits, meats, herbs and spices.

My last discovery was goat meat. It is found at the right side of the meat section of Farmer's Market, QC. (The sight of the goat meat brought back memories of the rows of *parilladas chivitos* (goat kids) lining the playa in Buenos Aires, Argentina.)

The stall in QC selling goat meat is called Mely's meat store. I was told by Mely's husband that he is doing quite well. First, the meat does not get any hormones for growth and muscle building, and it has free range grazing. So, I bought a kilo and made it into *calderata*. It was good!

With all this news about mad-cow disease caused by industrial feeds, chemical feeds and hormones, more and more people are turning to food sources without chemical intervention.

* * *

Along the same line of new trends is an e-mail from Jinky Tiukingcoc, who is a student at the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, New York. A beautifully situated place! I went there years ago and met the culinary staff. There were American, French, Italian, Chinese and Japanese chefs. This was in 1974! I was with a group of French restaurant and hotel owners. The institute is now world-famous.

Jinky is at the CIA to study baking and pastry. At a nutritional baking class, she learned that there is a need these days for gluten-free diet. This is a diet especially planned for those who have autism. It lessens tantrums.

The substitutes recommended are tapioca flour, cornstarch, rice and rice flour, buckwheat and potato starch. Luckily, we Filipinos and most Asians depend on rice for our staple. But I am including this for those who may have family members with autism.

* * *

Joanne Sy asked about the making of katsudon. Again, I called my niece Veronica Villanueva, who is married to a Japanese executive and who is so completely at home in Japan and her Japanese friends.

She said katsudon is a popular Japanese pork dish served over rice. (*Katsu* means fried.) These days, she says, there are variations using chicken. In which case, you call this *tori katsu*.

### Katsudon

4 pieces pork chops about 100-120 g per piece
Salt and pepper
½ c flour
2 eggs, slightly beaten
¾ c bread crumbs
Oil for frying
**Sauce:**
4 tbsp *dashi*, bought from Japanese food stores
6 tbsp soy sauce
6 tbsp sugar
4 tbsp mirin
1 medium onion, sliced thinly
4 eggs, beaten
½ c cooked green peas
Hot cooked rice
(Prepare 4 deep bowls to contain katsudon for serving)

Prepare pork chops by making incisions on its fat edge. This prevents the pork chop from curling up when frying. Season with salt and pepper on both sides. Beat eggs. Dust pork chops with flour on both sides. Dip in beaten eggs, then press into the breadcrumbs. Heat enough cooking oil and immerse the pork while cooking. Fry until golden brown. Turn pork chop and fry till golden brown. Drain and set aside. Mix all ingredients for the katsudon sauce. Portion out ¼ of the mixture.

Heat a little cooking oil. Add slices of onion and cook for 1 minute. Add the ¼ portion of katsudon sauce and heat until the mixture boils. Immerse the cooked pork chop in the hot sauce and add 1 beaten egg and 2 tbsp of green peas. Cook for 30 seconds only. Into a deep bowl with cooked rice, pour the cooked pork chop with the sauce and serve. Repeat for the other pieces of pork chop.

Notice how food preferences are going global?

*E-mail the author at ngdev@info.com.ph or write her at PDI, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City.*

The Maya Kitchen
presents
**Practical Courses for Budding Entrepreneurs**

This month the Maya Kitchen offers practical courses on food and beverage services to show you how to create earning opportunities with guaranteed results. Tailor-made for budding entrepreneurs and career-oriented individuals. Check out which schedule suits you best and enroll now.

**ONE-DAY SPECIALS:**

***Baking with Institutional Mixes:*** Feb. 3 (Sat) 1:30 – 5 p.m. Assorted Brownies (Black Forest, Apple Chunk, Rocky Road), Pineapple Carrot Cake, Choco-Banana Loaf, Chocolate Muffins with Fudge Frosting, Pretzel, Hotdog on Stick, Butterscotch Squares, Chocolate Crinkles. Includes lecture on cost profit analysis. P400.

***Lumpia Lumpia:*** (a new craze in lumpia wrapped meals): Feb. 10 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Korean Beef, ala Cubana, Shrimp & Garlic Gambas, Fish Fillet, Guinataan dessert. Bonus: Chinese Fresh Lumpia. P500.

***Waitering Made Easy:*** Feb. 10 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Product knowledge, type of table service, sequence of serving, order taking, procedure of table setting and bussing out, napkin folding and skirting with hands-on. Free lunch, OJT referral. P1,000.

***Japanese Cooking:*** Feb. 17 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Miso Soup, Tempura, Sukiyaki, Kamameshi, Assorted Sushi Kappamaki, Tekamaki, California Maki with workshop on Sushi preparation. P750.

***Bartending Basics:*** Feb. 17 (Sat) 1 - 5 p.m. Product knowledge bar terminilogy, wine classification, mixed drink preparations, standard drink recipes, different garnishes. Dos and Don'ts in beverage service. With free snacks and OJT referral. P750.

***Restaurant Operations:*** Feb. 24 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Kitchen organization, cycle menu planning, costing, cost control, purchasing, labor, payroll, inventory, etc. Proven techniques on profitable service operations with free lunch. P1,500.

**CERTIFICATE COURSES with hands-on:**

***Comprehensive Cooking Workshop:*** Feb. 6-9 (T-F) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. For Career Cooks. Coverage: menu planning, international standard techniques of preparing stocks, soups, sauces, dressings, salads, main dishes, homemade cold cuts, etc. applicable to 1001 recipes including plate and platter presentation. Free lunch. P2,500.

***Basic Baking:*** Feb. 7-9 (Wed-Fri) 1:30 - 5 p.m. Hands-on techniques in preparing basic pie crust, different types of cakes, quick bread, yeast breads and more. P2,000.

***Domestic Cooking:*** Feb. 13-16 or Feb. 27, 28, Mar. 2 & 3 (T-S) 1:30 - 5 p.m. For beginners, housewives, househelps. Basic food preparation, cooking methods for meats, poultry, fish, pasta, vegetables, sauces, de-boning of chicken and fish, with actual preparation of popular Filipino and Oriental dishes, basic garnishing and table setting. Free apron and chef's hat. P2000.

# Practical courses

THIS month, Maya Kitchen's practical courses will show you how to create earning opportunities with guaranteed results.

On Feb. 3, 1:30-5 p.m., a course on "Baking with Institutional Mixes" teaches how to bake huge quantities of baked goodies by using Maya's 2-kg pack mixes. A lecture on cost profit analysis will cap the session.

For beginning bakers, "Basic Baking" offers hands-on techniques in preparing basic piecrust, different types of cakes, quiche breads, yeast breads and more from Feb. 7-9, 1:30-5 p.m.

"A Comprehensive Cooking Workshop" is also scheduled on Feb. 6-9, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Designed for career cooks, the course features menu planning, international standard techniques of preparing stocks, soups, sauces, dressings, salads, main dishes, homemade cold cuts applicable to 1,001 recipes and, plate and platter presentation.

Learn the ropes of waitering in "Waitering Made Easy" on Feb. 10, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. There will be lectures on product knowledge, types of table service, sequence of serving, proper order taking, procedure of table setting and bussing out, napkin folding and skirting. There's free lunch and an OJT referral.

Master the intricacies of bartending by enrolling in "Bartending Basics" scheduled on Feb. 17, 1-5 p.m. Here, you'll learn bar terminology, wine classification, mixed drink preparations, standard drink recipes and different garnishing. You'll also know the dos and don'ts in beverage service.

Be a skilled restaurateur with a lesson on "Restaurant Operations." On Feb. 24, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., find out about kitchen organization, cycle menu planning, costing, cost control, purchasing, labor, payroll and inventory.

The Maya Kitchen is at 8/F Liberty Building, A. Arnaiz Avenue (formerly Pasay Road), Makati City or call 892-1185/5011, locals 108 or 109.

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Come & join!
CLUB TIA's
Get a Club Tia's DISCOUNT CARD for a minimum purchase of P1,000 and get as much as 10% DISCOUNT for Club Tia's cardholders.

Promo runs February 1 - April 30, 2001
Offer is good for dine-in only.
Per DTI NCR Permit #0100 series of 2001

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TOMAS MORATO
Tomas Morato cor. Scout de Guia St.,
Quezon City
Tel. 371-1473

SM MEGAMALL
4th level Bridgeway, SM Megamall,
Mandaluyong City
Tel. 635-2326

# Value-for-money special

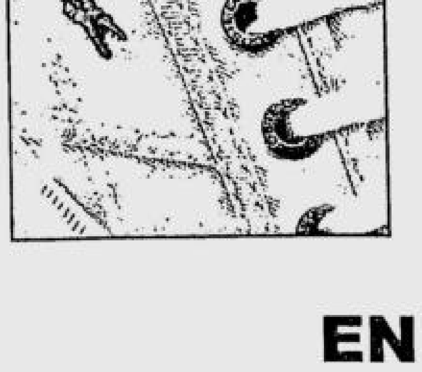
FAST-FOOD giant Jollibee has introduced another value-for-money *langhap sarap* special, "Shanghai Mania." The promo, which is ongoing until Feb. 12, rolls back the prices of its Shanghai value meal and Spaghetti value meal with three pieces of Shanghai Rolls on the side.

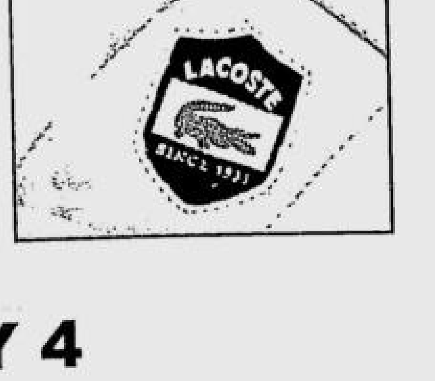
For only P39, customers may avail of the Shanghai Roll value meal, which includes six delicious, delectable rolls with sweet and sour sauce, rice and regular softdrink, or the Spaghetti value meal with three pieces of Shanghai Rolls and regular softdrink—perfect for a lunch or dinner treat!

According to Trixie Roxas, Jollibee marketing manager for products, "Filipinos today are placing a premium on value in their real choices. That's why we at Jollibee continue to provide our customers with meals that not only are satisfying but also affordable. We invite our customers to visit any of our 365 stores nationwide and try Shanghai Mania."

LACOSTE
CHAUSSURES

FOOTWEAR INVENTORY
SALE





ENDS FEBRUARY 4

LEVEL 2, SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL
EDSA, MANDALUYONG CITY
TELEPHONE 635-0744

LEVEL 2, PADRE FAURA WING
ROBINSONS PLACE - MANILA
TELEPHONE 522-7778

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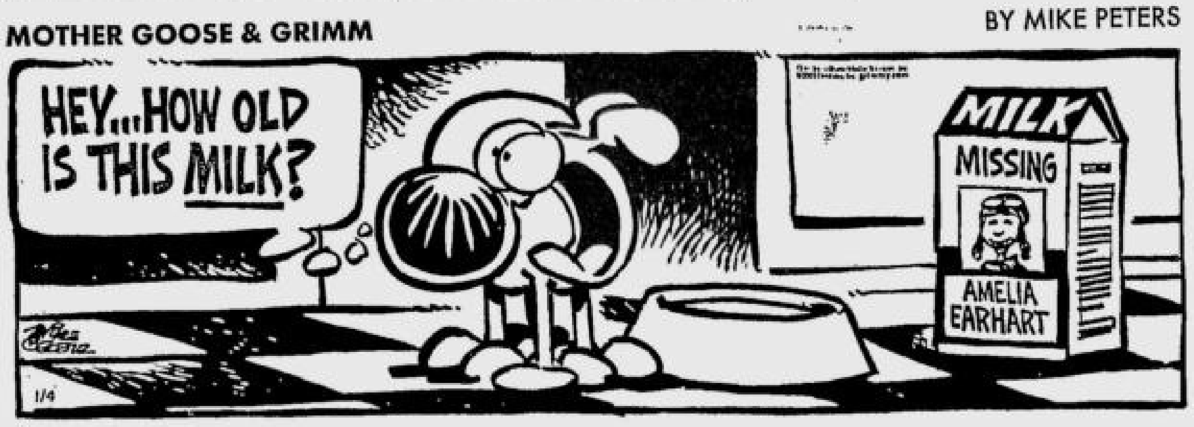
AYALA CENTER, MAKATI CITY
TELEPHONE 867-4077

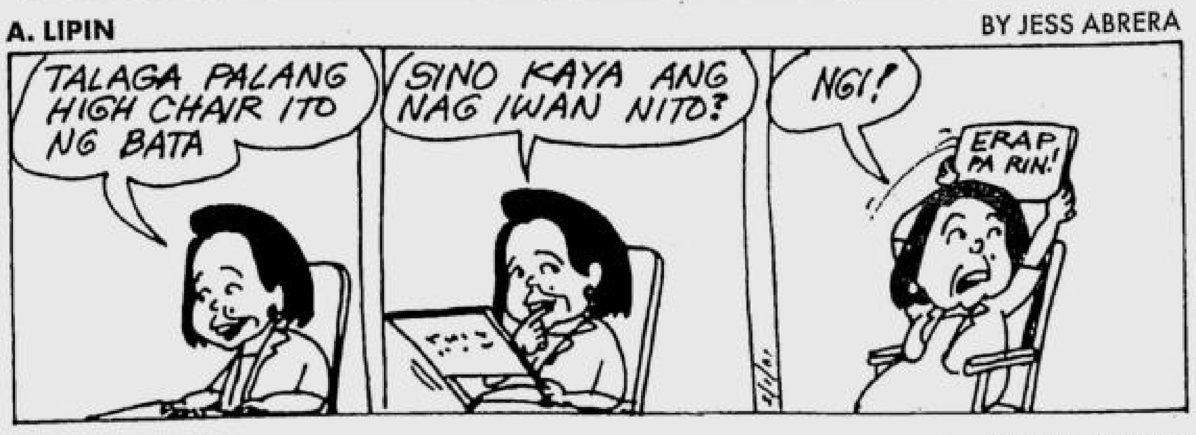
GROUND FLOOR, THE POWER PLANT MALL
ROCKWELL CENTER, MAKATI CITY
TELEPHONE 898-0933

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0092 Series of 2001.

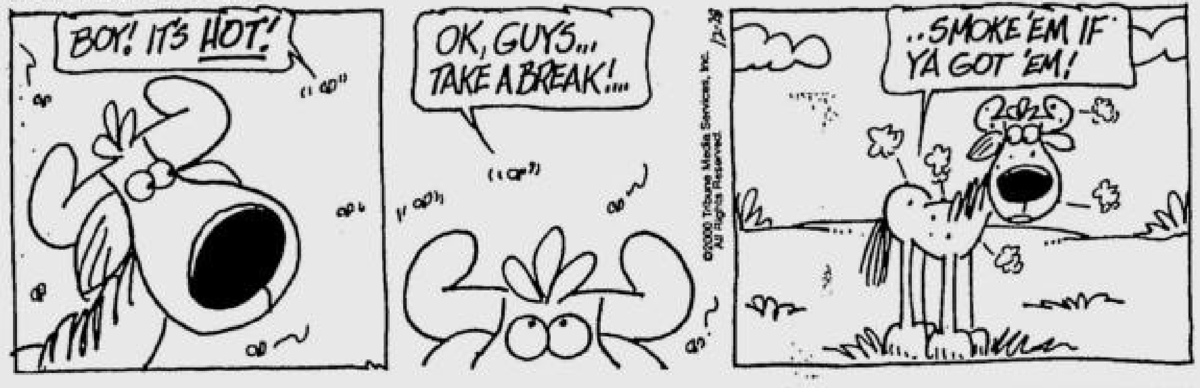
### MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM
BY MIKE PETERS


HEY...HOW OLD IS THIS MILK?
MILK
MISSING
AMELIA EARHART
1/4

### A. LIPIN
BY JESS ABRERA


TALAGA PALANG HIGH CHAIR ITO NG BATA
SINO KAYA ANG NAG IWAN NITO?
NGI!
ERAP PA RIN!

### ANIMAL CRACKER
BY FRED WAGNER


BOY! IT'S HOT!
OK, GUYS... TAKE A BREAK!...
..SMOKE 'EM IF YA GOT 'EM!
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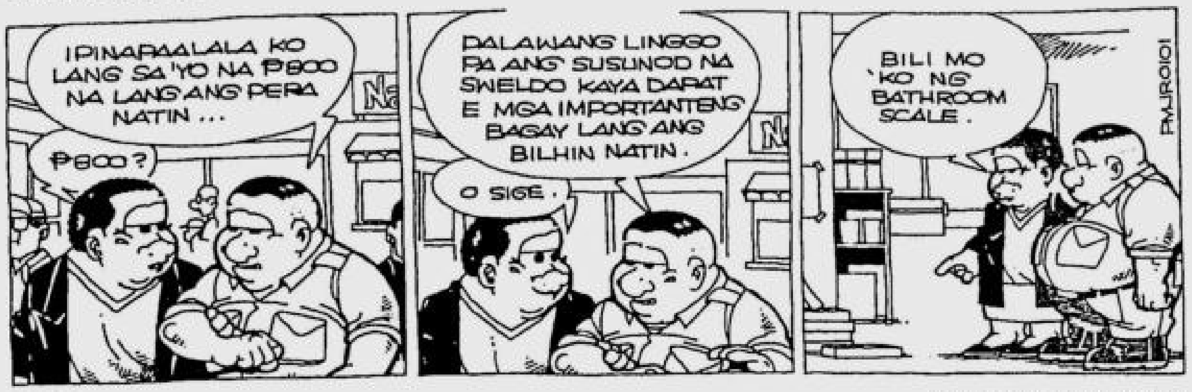
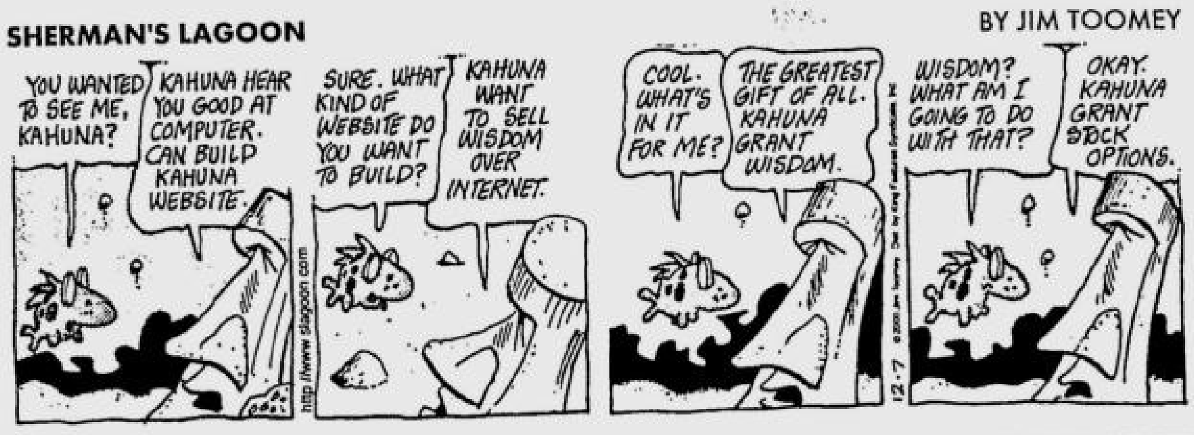
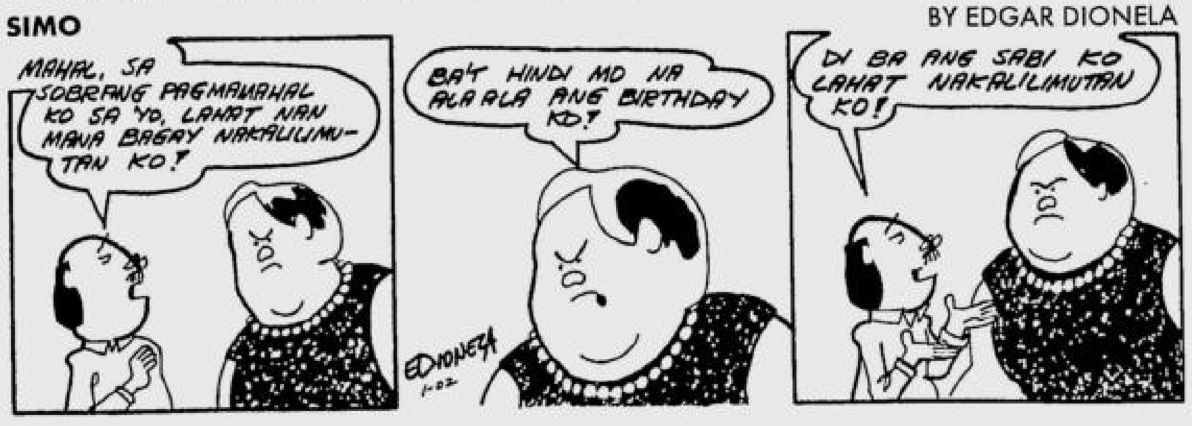
### PUGAD BABOY
BY P.M. JUNIOR


IPINAPAALALA KO LANG SA 'YO NA ₱800 NA LANG ANG PERA NATIN ...
₱800?
DALAWANG LINGGO PA ANG SUSUNOD NA SWELDO KAYA DAPAT E MGA IMPORTANTENG BAGAY LANG ANG BILHIN NATIN.
O SIGE.
BILI MO 'KO NG BATHROOM SCALE.
PMJR0101

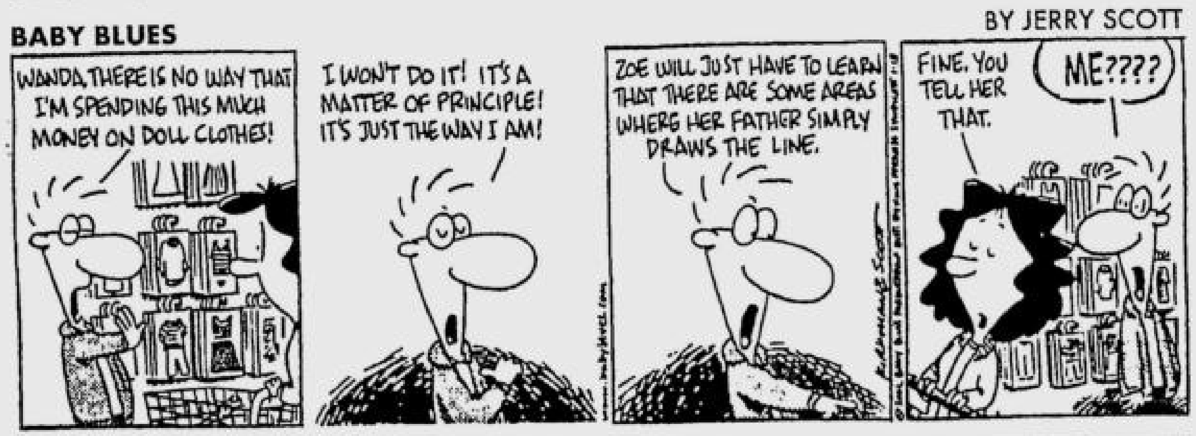
### SHERMAN'S LAGOON
BY JIM TOOMEY


YOU WANTED TO SEE ME, KAHUNA?
KAHUNA HEAR YOU GOOD AT COMPUTER. CAN BUILD KAHUNA WEBSITE.
SURE. WHAT KIND OF WEBSITE DO YOU WANT TO BUILD?
KAHUNA WANT TO SELL WISDOM OVER INTERNET.
COOL. WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?
THE GREATEST GIFT OF ALL. KAHUNA GRANT WISDOM.
WISDOM? WHAT AM I GOING TO DO WITH THAT?
OKAY. KAHUNA GRANT STOCK OPTIONS.
http://www.slagoon.com
12-7

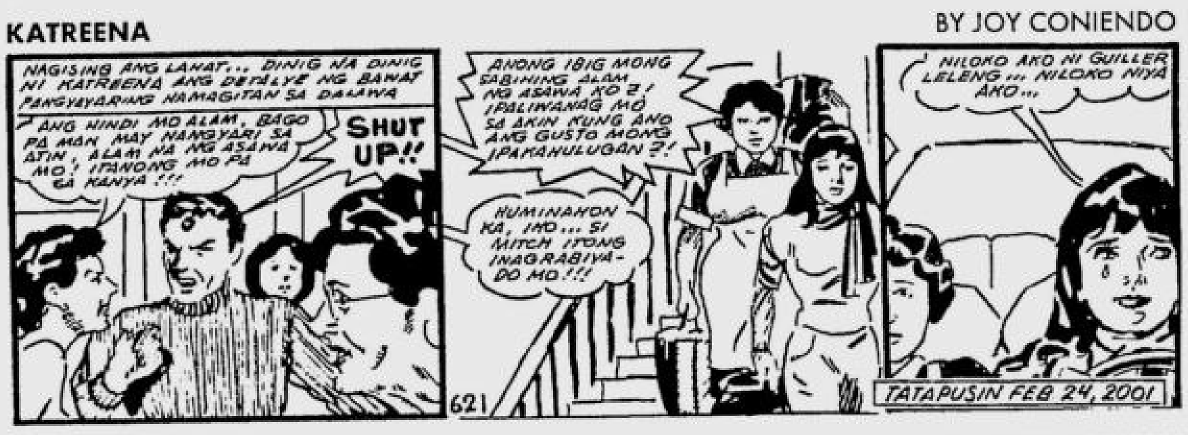
### SIMO
BY EDGAR DIONELA


MAHAL, SA SOBRANG PAGMAMAHAL KO SA 'YO, LAHAT NAN MANA BAGAY NAKALILIMUTAN KO!
BA'T HINDI MO NA ALA ALA ANG BIRTHDAY KO?
DI BA ANG SABI KO LAHAT NAKALILIMUTAN KO!
EDIONELA 1-02

### BABY BLUES
BY JERRY SCOTT


WANDA, THERE IS NO WAY THAT I'M SPENDING THIS MUCH MONEY ON DOLL CLOTHES!
I WON'T DO IT! IT'S A MATTER OF PRINCIPLE! IT'S JUST THE WAY I AM!
ZOE WILL JUST HAVE TO LEARN THAT THERE ARE SOME AREAS WHERE HER FATHER SIMPLY DRAWS THE LINE.
FINE. YOU TELL HER THAT.
ME????

### KATREENA
BY JOY CONIENDO


NAGISING ANG LAHAT... DINIG NA DINIG NI KATREENA ANG DETALYE NG BAWAT PANGYAYARING NAMAGITAN SA DALAWA
ANG HINDI MO ALAM, BAGO PA MAN MAY NANGYARI SA ATIN, ALAM NA NG ASAWA MO! ITANONG MO PA SA KANYA!!!
SHUT UP!!
ANONG IBIG MONG SABIHING ALAM NG ASAWA KO?! IPALIWANAG MO SA AKIN KUNG ANO ANG GUSTO MONG IPAKAHULUGAN?!
HUMINAHON KA, IHO... SI MITCH ITONG INAGRABIYADO MO!!!
NILOKO AKO NI GUILLER LELENG... NILOKO NIYA AKO...
621
TATAPUSIN FEB 24, 2001

## HOROSCOPE
BY EUGENIA LAST

**CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY:** Clark Gable, Lisa Marie Presley, Princess Stephanie, Terry Jones, Jayj Jacobs, Sherilyn Fenn, Sherman Hemsley, Boris Yeltsin

**Happy Birthday:** You will be disciplined, competitive and innovative this year as you strive to turn your intentions into reality. You will be creative in your pursuits and will not let the trivial things bother you. You will view the big picture and do whatever is necessary to make this the best year ever. Your numbers: 5, 19, 26, 31, 36, 44

**ARIES (March 21-April 19):** Your tendency to overindulge will result in weight gain or minor illness. You will have to be careful not to overreact emotionally with your mate.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20):** Your secretive nature will cause problems for you if you won't share your thoughts with your mate. Be careful not to neglect yourself. Rest and good dietary habits will be a must.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20):** Romantic relationships will suffer if you try to face important issues that are driving you crazy. Your partner will take offense and you'll spend the day alone.

**CANCER (June 21-July 22):** Don't be too eager to talk about your feelings today. You need to discover what others are thinking before you put your own beliefs on the line.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22):** Travel will open up new avenues that will enhance your knowledge and bring about important friendships. You should be thinking about signing up for a course or seminar.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):** Extravagance and overindulgence will be tempting. Be careful not to place unreasonable demands on others. Don't follow the crowd. You need to make up your own mind. Avoid getting involved in joint ventures.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22):** Difficulties will surface if you haven't paid enough attention to your partner. Financial limitations may cause frustrations in trying to achieve goals.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21):** Be careful not to divulge secret information. You will have to trust your own instincts. Expect friends to exaggerate and overreact to situations. It's best to keep your thoughts to yourself.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21):** You will have ample energy to get involved in competitive activities that interest you. Your creative talent and ability to work with youngsters will come in handy.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19):** You can expect opposition from those you live with. Don't argue; just make your own plans to do things with friends. Don't make changes to your living quarters unless everyone is in favor of your plans.

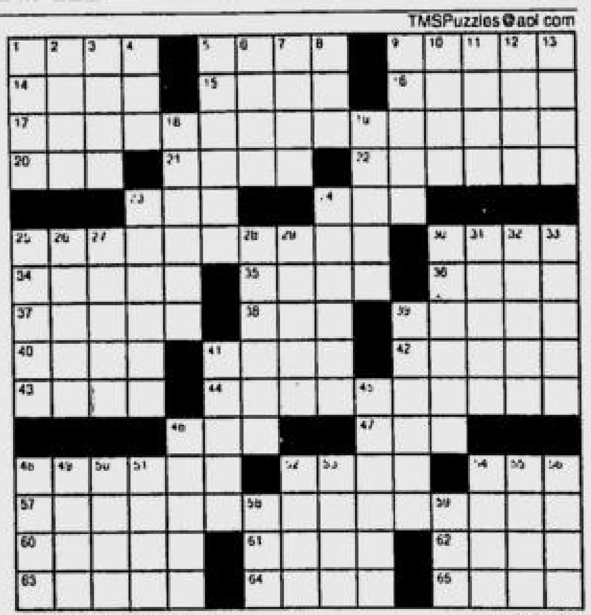
**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18):** You will get along much better with your friends than you will with your family. Try to get your household duties out of the way before you take off for the day.

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20):** You will have the discipline to get odd jobs completed. Don't let children be too demanding. You may have difficulties if you make unreasonable promises.

**Birthday Baby:** You are a bit stubborn but only when you feel that you are right. You will never back down and will always be able to find a solution to any problem that faces you. You are a thinker and a doer.

## DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Randall J. Hartman
Escondido, CA
12/19/00

ACROSS
1 Dole (out)
5 "Harold and Maude" star Bud
9 Dispur's state
14 "Rhyme Pays" rapper
15 Pinocchio for one
16 Brandon de Wilde's cinematic cry
17 Place for liquid funds
20 Long, long time
21 Pen fills
22 Lots and lots
23 __-fi
24 Boozer
25 Carte blanche
30 Novelist Amelia
34 Indian cash
35 Spanish cheers
36 Tony's cousin
37 __ sanctum
38 "The Delta of Venus" writer
39 Ginger cookies
40 Boxer Max
41 Broadway beginning
42 Roast host
43 Paleozoic and Mesozoic
44 Charlie of Berlin, e.g.
46 In favor of
47 Giant Mel
48 Strive toward
52 Italian bell town
54 Shaquille O'Neal's org.
57 Marble-moving game
60 Mongrels
61 Flushing stadium
62 Give off
63 Cultural values
64 Actor Sean
65 Hindu discipline

DOWN
1 "Of __ and Men"
2 Sound rebound
3 Adolescent
4 List-ending abbr.
5 Outpatient facility
6 Sty comment
7 Past of riches?
8 __-la-la
9 English racetrack
10 Like broken horses
11 Man of Tarsus
12 Actress Bancroft
13 Home team at 61A
18 Jan Stenerud or Jason Elam
19 Too many __ spoil the broth
23 Dirty looks
24 Like a drive at Pebble Beach?
25 Example of graft
26 Part of LEM
27 Snorer's peril
28 Head cheese
29 Type type
30 Witticism
31 Early calculators
32 Age
33 Correct a clock
39 Kind of tank
41 Farm measures
45 Seoul resident
46 Fourth estate
48 Zenith
49 Close
50 Heart
51 Fascinated by
52 Persistent pain
53 __ and there
54 Verne captain
55 Floating hoosegow
56 Nora's pooch
58 Kreskin's forte?
59 "__ Largo"

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | B | B | E | ■ | M | A | M | M | A | ■ | M | A | R | S |
| L | U | L | L | ■ | O | L | E | I | C | ■ | O | M | I | T |
| F | L | A | K | ■ | L | I | C | I | T | ■ | R | A | C | E |
| A | B | C | ■ | F | A | S | H | I | O | N | S | H | O | W |
| ■ | ■ | K | M | A | R | T | ■ | ■ | F | E | E | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| I | O | W | A | N | S | ■ | M | A | G | E | L | L | A | N |
| S | M | I | T | S | ■ | B | I | P | O | D | ■ | O | B | I |
| L | E | D | A | ■ | W | I | N | E | D | ■ | K | N | O | X |
| E | G | O | ■ | P | I | K | E | R | ■ | S | E | G | U | E |
| S | A | W | B | O | N | E | S | ■ | C | L | E | F | T | S |
| ■ | ■ | ■ | O | E | D | ■ | ■ | A | L | O | N | E | ■ | ■ |
| S | T | O | R | M | W | I | N | D | O | W | ■ | L | A | D |
| C | A | R | R | ■ | A | D | A | M | S | ■ | C | L | U | E |
| A | L | S | O | ■ | R | E | N | E | E | ■ | B | O | D | E |
| B | L | O | W | ■ | D | E | A | N | S | ■ | S | W | I | M |

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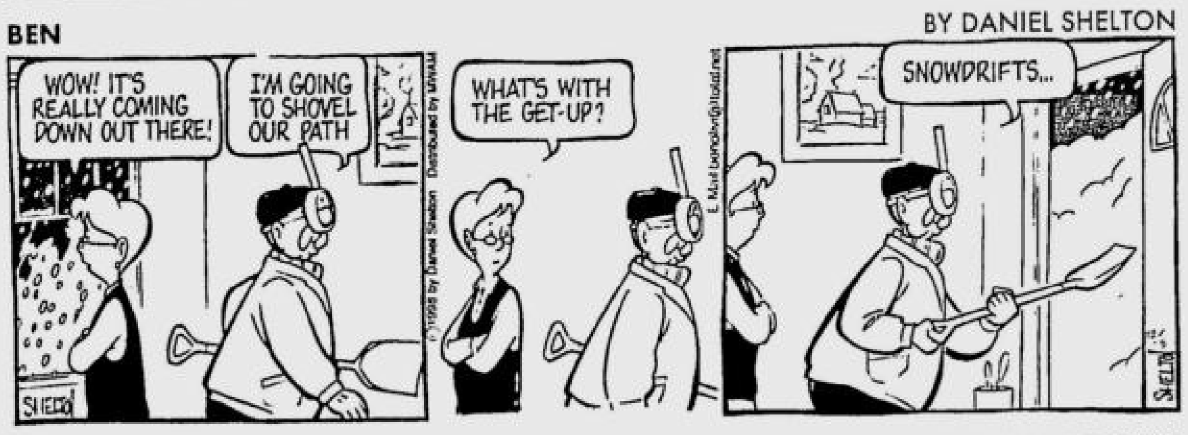
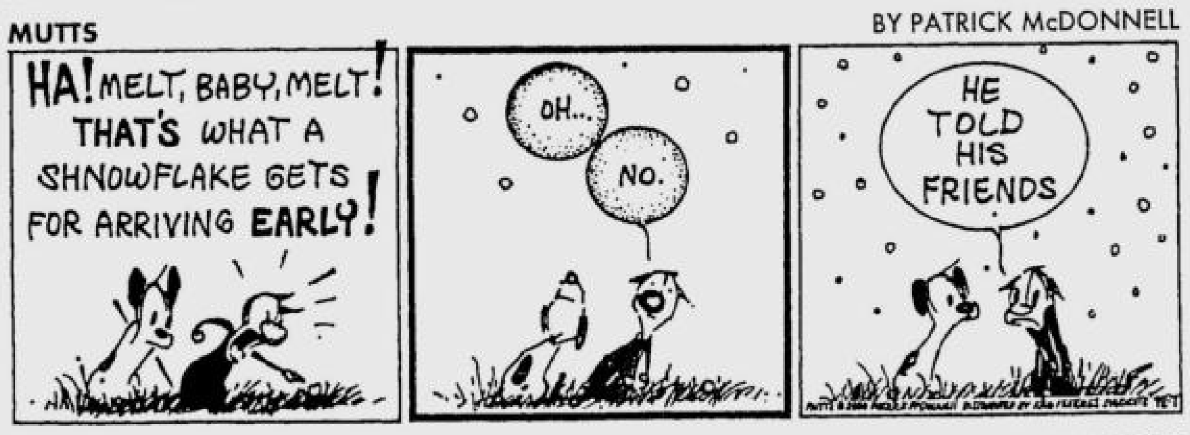
12/19/00

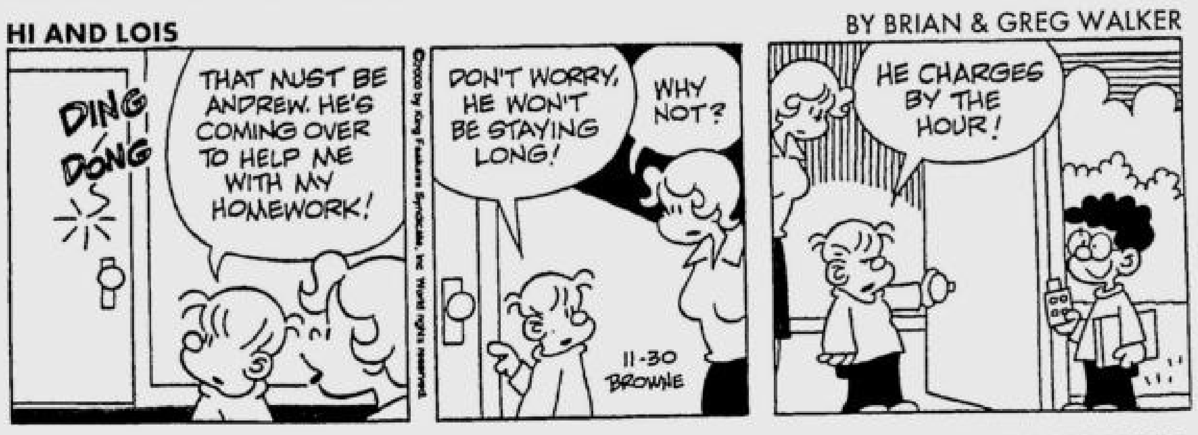
### BEN
BY DANIEL SHELTON


WOW! IT'S REALLY COMING DOWN OUT THERE!
I'M GOING TO SHOVEL OUR PATH
WHAT'S WITH THE GET-UP?
SNOWDRIFTS...
SHELTON

### MUTTS
BY PATRICK McDONNELL


HA! MELT, BABY, MELT! THAT'S WHAT A SHNOWFLAKE GETS FOR ARRIVING EARLY!
OH...
NO.
HE TOLD HIS FRIENDS

### HI AND LOIS
BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


DING DONG
THAT MUST BE ANDREW. HE'S COMING OVER TO HELP ME WITH MY HOMEWORK!
DON'T WORRY, HE WON'T BE STAYING LONG!
WHY NOT?
HE CHARGES BY THE HOUR!
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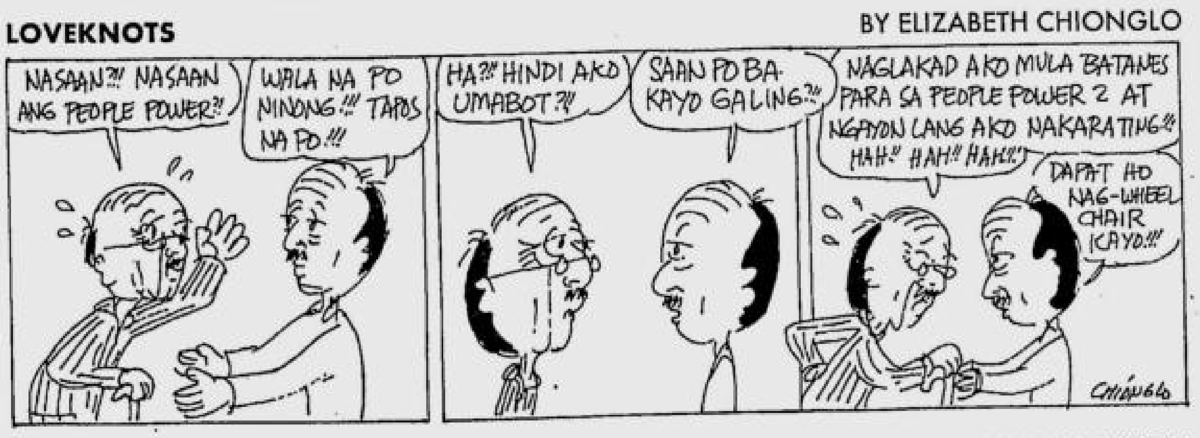
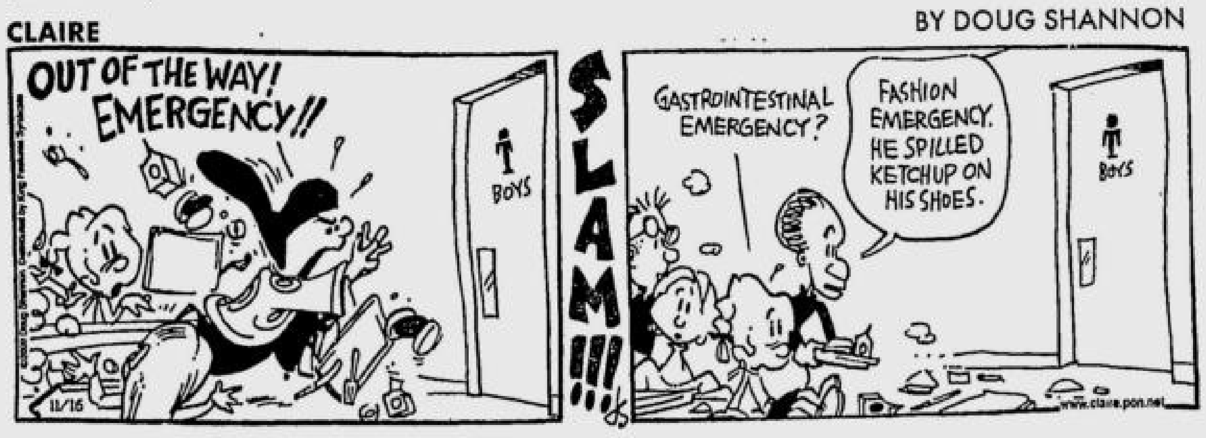
11-30
BROWNE

### LOVEKNOTS
BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


NASAAN?!! NASAAN ANG PEOPLE POWER?!
WALA NA PO NINONG!!! TAPOS NA PO!!!
HA?!! HINDI AKO UMABOT?!!
SAAN PO BA KAYO GALING?!!
NAGLAKAD AKO MULA BATANES PARA SA PEOPLE POWER 2 AT NGAYON LANG AKO NAKARATING!! HAH!! HAH!! HAH!!
DAPAT HO NAG-WHEEL CHAIR KAYO!!!
CHIONGLO

### CLAIRE
BY DOUG SHANNON


OUT OF THE WAY! EMERGENCY!!
BOYS
SLAM!!!
GASTROINTESTINAL EMERGENCY?
FASHION EMERGENCY. HE SPILLED KETCHUP ON HIS SHOES.
BOYS
11/16
www.claire.pon.net

# Bangkok holiday

**THE MAD TEA PARTY**

*Clinton Palanca*

IN A CORRIDOR off the Author's Lounge, there is a bookcase which contains books written "by authors who have previously stayed at the Oriental Hotel." If I'd had a copy of my own book of short stories on me at that time, I would have found a way to jimmy the lock and slip it in there, next to Somerset Maugham and Barbara Cartland. This, I think, should be the ultimate ambition for an author to aspire to—not so much the Pulitzer or the Nobel Prize, but to have a suite at the Oriental named after him.

It was a good time to go on holiday in Bangkok. The hall porters, along with asking the usual questions about whether I was there on business or pleasure, and whether it was my first time to stay at the hotel, were able to discuss current events and politics, though we did stop short of discussing the ills of the welfare system in socialist democracies. "You have new President, crap?" the concierge asked. (Tacking on "crap" to the end of a sentence in Thai is a sign of respect; it can also mean "Yes, go on," so that one may also hear Thai men on their mobile phones saying "Crap... crap... crap" to whatever is being said on the other end of the line, which can be disconcerting at first.)

I asked the chauffeur where I could get a bite to eat near the hotel. Limousine and taxi drivers are, in general, great sources of information, as long as they are not trying to sell you Thai girl, very nice, very clean, very cheap, I take you now. One hour boom-boom? You don't like girl, you like boy? No? You like good restaurant? Jewelry shop?

His face lit up at my question. "Do you like noodles?" he asked. I nodded. We were passing through the heart of Bangkok just then, and although the city was a uniform dingy gray around me in the darkness, the smells of its pulsating life were seeping into the car's interior and triggering memories, excitement, anticipation. The prospect of a meal from room service didn't seem very palatable. I checked in quickly and, as it were, hurled myself at the city.

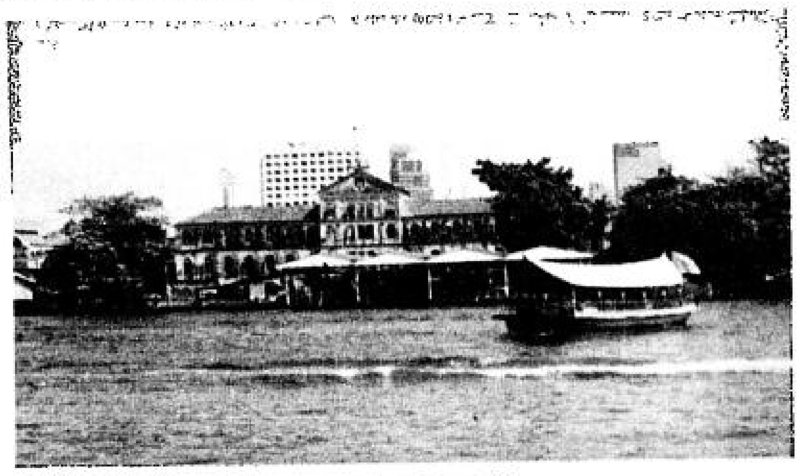
The driver's recommendation was exactly what I was looking for: a collection of carts clustered on a street corner, with folding tables and chairs set up along the sidewalk. Herb-scented steam rose from a vat of simmering broth; bare incandescent bulbs glinted on vegetables and fruits piled high in cubical glass containers, or cut open and packed in with cracked ice. I attempted, feebly, to communicate in Thai, and resorted to a vague, sweeping motion. "Everything!" I cried. "Put all in!" And she did: cubes of coagulated blood, short segments of intestine looking like gray macaroni, crunchy bits of scored kidney, floating amid translucent rice noodles. I put in a spoonful of each of the condiments; red chili flakes, fish sauce, vinegar and sugar. It was spicy, heady, exuberant; ambrosial. I washed it all down with the juice from a chilled coconut.

### Watching riverboats

The next morning I forced myself to wake up from breakfast, mainly because it was included in the price of the room. I wandered down, squinting in the sun, and it was then that I began to understand what the Oriental was all about. The night before I had been mildly disappointed with the room; it was a beautiful, well-appointed room, true, but nothing more than a very nice hotel room. But emerging onto the veranda where tables and chairs were arrayed along the banks of the river, the morning sun glinting on the silver of the elaborate breakfast buffet set out along the length of the terrace, was something else entirely. I ate perfectly poached eggs and immaculately fresh fruit while watching riverboats go up and down the river; or, just as frequently, from one bank to the other.

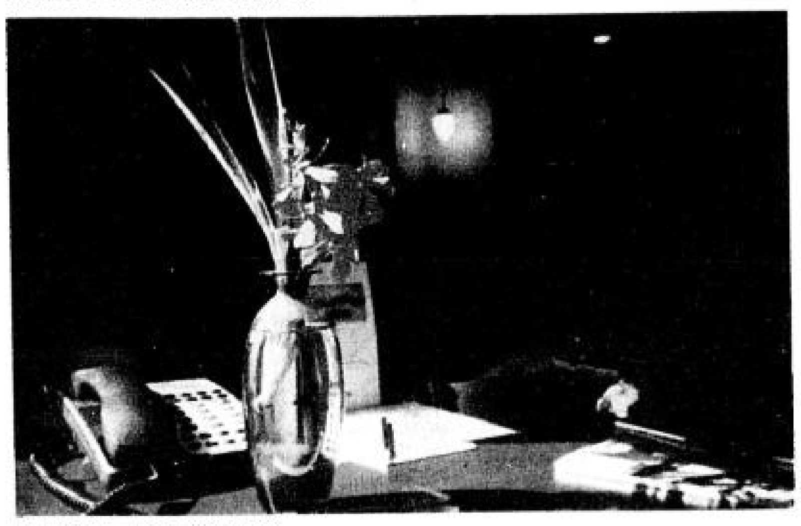
It is one of these boats that shuttles guests to and from the Oriental Spa, located on the other side of the river, beside the Peninsula Hotel. I'm not one for these complicated treatments, where they slather you with mud from the Dead Sea, then wrap you with seaweed (like futomaki, I suppose), and then rub curry spices into your groin. But I do enjoy a good massage, and the rooms at this spa are magnificent.

I stayed there for one night, and the cost is not something I'd like to think about again. I did make the most of it, though, in typical Pinoy fashion, by thoroughly looting the room in order to add the stuff to my collection at home. If ever I have anyone over to stay, she will have a choice of fluffy slippers from the Savoy, the Ritz, or the Oriental; and will be able to pick from a wide selection of shower caps, emery boards and shampoos in tiny bottles. (I do stop at major appliances, though, and have always returned the opera glasses that you can get for 20p in West End theaters.)



**THE BOAT** that ferries guests to the Oriental Spa.

**BREAKFAST** at the Sukhothai



**STILL** life at the Oriental

### Pleasant surprise

On my way back from Chiang Mai, where I was doing a cookery course on Northern Thai cuisine, I opted, for reasons of variety and austerity, to stay at the Sukhothai Hotel, which is the second-best hotel in Bangkok, and is half the price of the Oriental. I had been there once before, for after-dinner dessert, and had admire the architecture on a cerebral level: it's very nice, but not quite my style. It's the sort of Asian chic style favored by designers at the moment: white walls, downlighters on carvings, uplighters on lotus ponds, etc.; very Aman, in fact.

I was prepared to turn up my nose at the Sukhothai, but actually found myself pleasantly surprised. The hotel is part of the movement in the last decade (Ian Schrager's W hotels are a good example) of an attempt to improve on what people thought could not be improved upon: that is, they attempted to built a better mousetrap. The hotel as we know it is essentially a 19th-century invention, perfected by the Swiss hoteliers and people like Cesar Ritz. Second-tier hotels were, basically, inferior copies of these "palaces" (the anglicized word has entered even the French language).

The differences are subtle but pleasingly palpable. You are led to your room not by the receptionist, but by the bellboy, who gets into the lift with your luggage with you. Some might complain about being in the same elevator as the baggage, but I think it's preferable to the awkward five-minute wait when you sit around waiting for your suitcases to arrive, wondering how much to tip. They don't use fitted sheets, but duvets. There is high-speed Internet access in every room. The desk drawer is not filled with useless brochures, but with paperclips, a stapler and Post-Its (which I took home, of course). The little basket on top of the mini refrigerator contains not the usual assortment of macadamia nuts and Toblerone chocolate, but far more useful things, such as breath mints, film and condoms. Wonderful little touches here and there, like a copy of GQ by the bed; but the best one of all is the bright yellow rubber-ducky beside the tub. (I took it home. I had to.)

I never did get to check out the buffet breakfast; every morning, I woke up just in time, but with hardly energy enough to shave and change, so I had breakfast sent up to the room. I ate my eggs in my bathrobe, watching MCM music videos, and then bit into the best croissant I've ever had in my life: and that's including the ones I've had in Paris, baked by artisan bakers in wood-fired ovens, blah blah blah.

The main problem with both the Sukhothai and the Oriental is that neither is actually near anything. The Oriental is in the old neighborhood, beside the Assumption School for Girls (which I suppose might be exciting for some people); there is a straggly row of touristy silver and gift shops along the same street, as well as one of those dubious tailors that promise, for $199, two suits, four shirts, four ties, two pajamas, a silk bathrobe and a pet monkey. The Sukhothai is in the middle of the financial district; you can sort of walk to Silom Road and Patpong, if you want that sort of thing. Neither is near the BTS or Skytrain, either.

But the Oriental's Thai restaurant has just been named one of the 10 destination restaurants in the world, and the Sukhothai's Celadon has the best Pad Thai I've ever tasted. Both have excellent spas. The concierges can get you anything. And as for, as they say, banging your cock in Bangkok, I have a friend who excels at seducing hotel staff, something I'd dearly like, to learn. And as for shopping, you'll never find a better one-stop place for towels, shoe horns, hangers and fluffy bathrobes. Why leave the hotel?

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# There's life for leftovers

(From page C1)

and tricks for recycling food.

First things first. Budget and plan for the week's marketing. Always go to the market—wet or dry, it doesn't matter—with a menu in mind to avoid impulse buying. Remember to buy fruits and vegetables that are in season and by the bulk – they cost cheaper. Be on the lookout for special offers but always pay particular attention to quality and expiration dates.

### Handling ingredients

Fresh veggies won't stay fresh for long and you'll need to consume them immediately. The longer-lasting vegetables include string beans, carrots, potatoes, cabbage and green beans. Those that are good for a few days include eggplant, beam sprouts, spinach and cucumber.

So, when buying veggies, remove them from plastic bags and wrap them in newspaper or brown paper. Keep in the refrigerator. As an alternative, invest in vegetable bins with vents that release moisture condensation or the droplets of water that cause veggies to rot easily.

When buying hotdogs or *chorizos* in shrink packs, remove the plastic and wrap individually in foil and freeze. By doing this, you avoid having to defrost the whole pack when you will need only a piece or two.

This tip applies to chicken, too. You don't want to defrost a whole chicken just to get two legs and a wing. When buying chicken, ask the butcher to cut it up for you into serving pieces. When you get home, divide the chicken into small packs, depending on how many pieces your family can consume in one meal. The same follows for meat and seafood. Package them according to use. "Be a frugal cook or baker," says Dorothy. "Learn how to approximate how much will be consumed in one sitting."

Freezing is one of the best methods to maintain the natural taste and nutritional value of fresh ingredients. Freeze hotcake mixes, cocoa powder and flour. Freezing them inhibits the growth of bugs commonly known as *bukbok*. You can also freeze walnuts, almonds and other nuts to slow down rancidity. Other freezable items are mozzarella and Parmesan cheeses.

Do not throw out leftover egg whites and egg yolks. "When we prepare *leche flan* we only use the egg yolks, or when we make icings for cakes, we only use the egg whites," reminds Dorothy. Egg whites are freezable. Egg yolks are freezable, too, but always remember to add a teaspoon of sugar for every egg yolk, mix well and then freeze. The sugar has its own natural preservatives.

When you buy desiccated coconut and do not intend to use it immediately, keep it frozen or it will produce a "soapy" after-taste. You don't need to thaw it out to use. You can add it right away to your recipe for macaroons, cookies or cakes.

For longer bread life, put a rib of celery in your bread container and you can keep the bread for a few more days.

### Handling leftovers

In managing leftover food, it is a must to learn how to recycle. Leftover roast chicken can be used for another recipe, such as chicken salad with potatoes, carrots and mayo or chicken filling. Same with roast beef or roast pork.

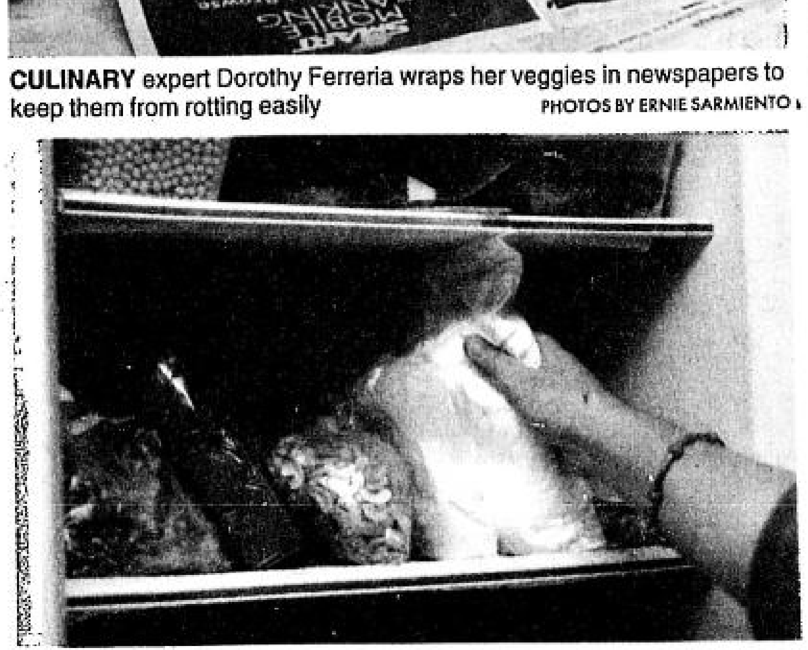
Use leftovers to make *pancit* or fried rice. In Dorothy's household, this is called "*halo-halo* special." "The leftover meat and chicken can be cleaned of their sauces, even rinsed, and recycled into something else. If there's isn't much meat, you can mince it and add it to some broth and veggies for a quick soup," reveals Dorothy, who offers hands-on demonstration classes on cooking and baking at Dorothy's Cooking School, New Manila, QC.

If, for some reason, you have a lot of leftovers, one thing you need to consider is variety. Mix and match. Cook together all the recycling leftovers into something new and exciting.

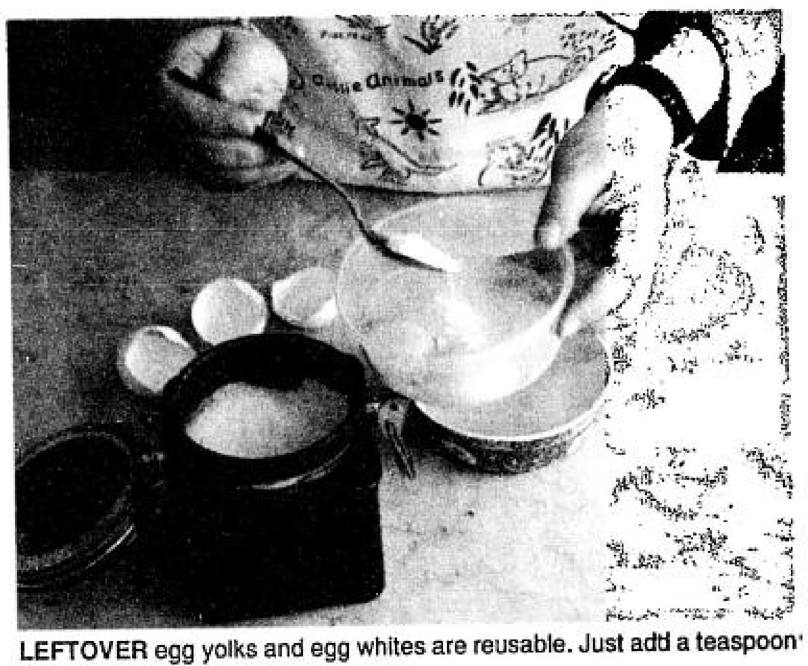
Fried rice and jambalaya are great ways to use up rice and any extra meats and veggies you happen to have on hand. You can come up with great tasting and complete meals. *Adobo* rice is an excellent way to use up leftover rice and *adobo*, and makes great *baon* for students or office workers.

**CULINARY** expert Dorothy Ferreria wraps her veggies in newspapers to keep them from rotting easily

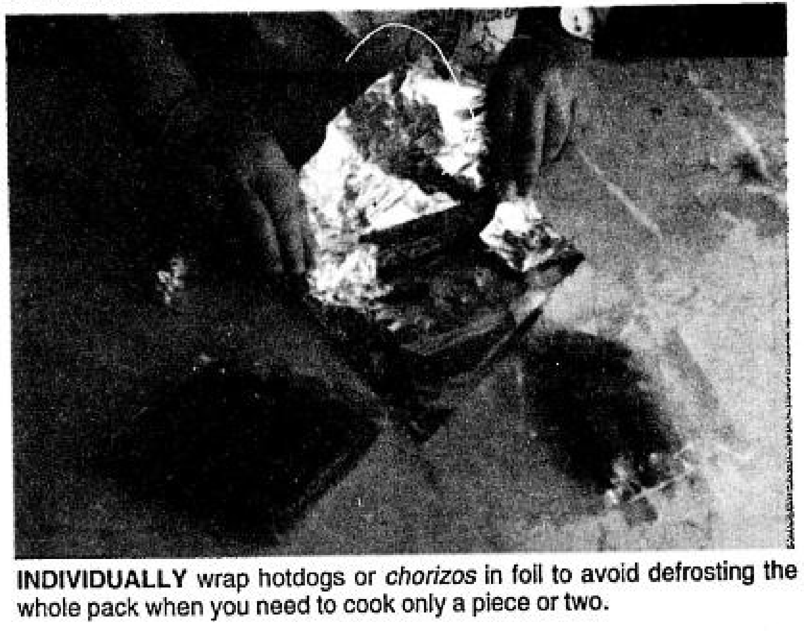
PHOTOS BY ERNIE SARMIENTO



**FREEZE** hotcake mixes, cocoa powder and flour to inhibit the growth of bugs.



**LEFTOVER** egg yolks and egg whites are reusable. Just add a teaspoon of sugar, mix well and freeze.



**INDIVIDUALLY** wrap hotdogs or *chorizos* in foil to avoid defrosting the whole pack when you need to cook only a piece or two.

If you have leftover *nilaga*, you can recycle it as *pochero* by adding *saging na saba*, garlic, onions, extra ham and tomato sauce.

Leftover *tocino*, *tapa*, *longganisa* or any cooked veggies are also ideal mixes for fried rice. Leftover spaghetti sauce may be served with fried rice, à la jambalaya. *Pancit bihon* is also good with fried rice and fried egg. "There's a whole range of possibilities with leftover food for improvised dishes," says Dorothy.

For new combination: mix leftover spaghetti sauce with rice, add veggies, pork, sausage or any leftover food and you got an off-the-cuff version of *paella*.

### Kitchen management

A *guisado* mix can also be prepared ahead of time especially when garlic, onions and tomatoes are abundant. Sauté a big batch and apportion. Place in bags and freeze. Infused in oil, Dorothy notes, the garlic will keep a long time. When needed, defrost in the microwave and transfer to a frying pan. You'll save a great deal of time when you don't have to peel garlic and slice onions and tomatoes every time you cook!

By the way, if you don't own a microwave to help you defrost things, then you need to thaw the food in the refrigerator, preferably doing this the night before you plan to use it, or in the morning if it's for dinnertime. For quick thawing, put the frozen ingredient in a bowl of hot water and leave it there.

Learn to appreciate the pressure cooker. Using the pressure cooker cuts down cooking time significantly especially when boiling meat for *sinigang*, stew or *bulalo*. Normally, Dorothy would cook a kilo of beef cubes and divide them into two or three equal portions. The tender beef can be used to make *sinigang*, beef stew, *pochero*, *kare-kare*, etc.

With all the freezing and storing in the fridge, let's not forget to keep that wonderful kitchen appliance as clean as possible. For easy cleaning, Dorothy uses an old cloth soaked in water with baking soda. The baking soda removes the food stains. To remove food odors, keep some charcoal briquettes in a bowl in the back of the ref. Remember to change the charcoal every few months.

*If you have other cooking and household tips to share, e-mail the author at vbaga@inquirer. com.ph*

# February 2 • 3 • 4 Friday Saturday Sunday 10am - 9pm

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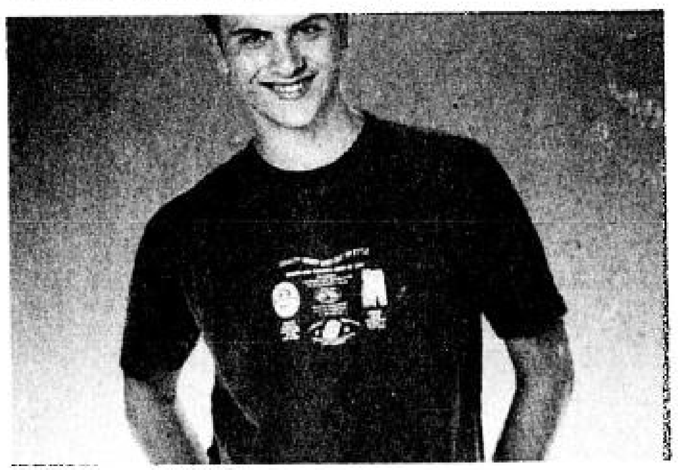

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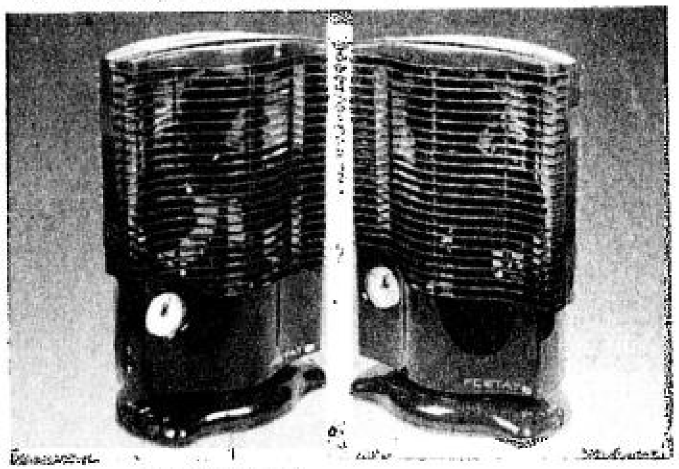

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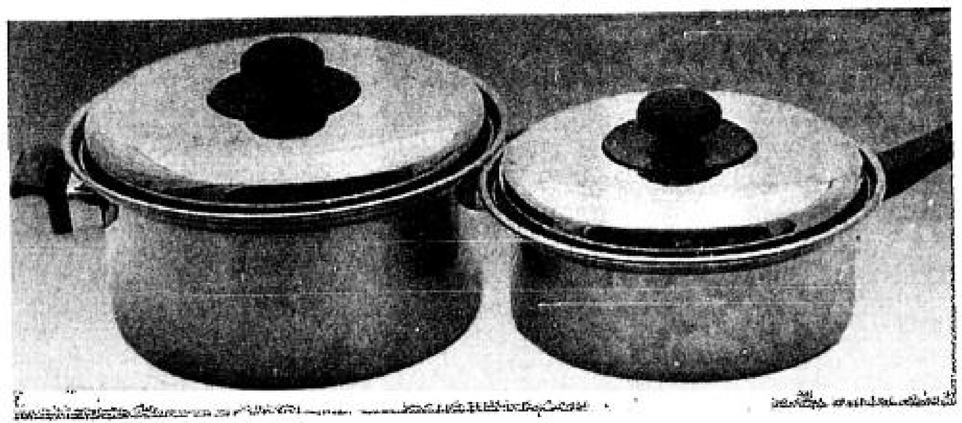

**sale 149.75** reg. 299.75
save 50% on
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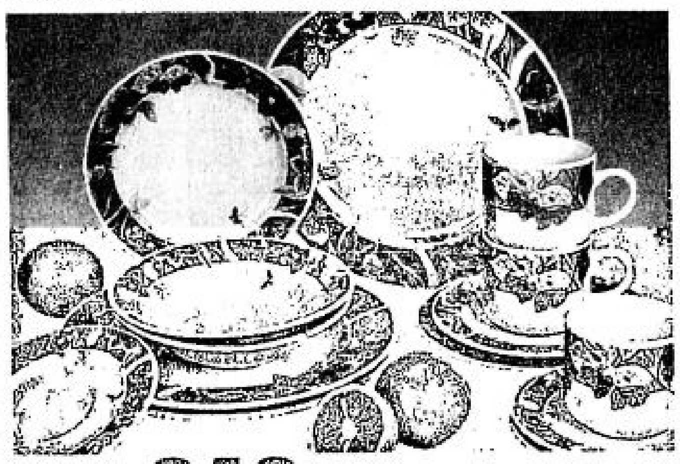

**sale 249.75** reg. 499.75
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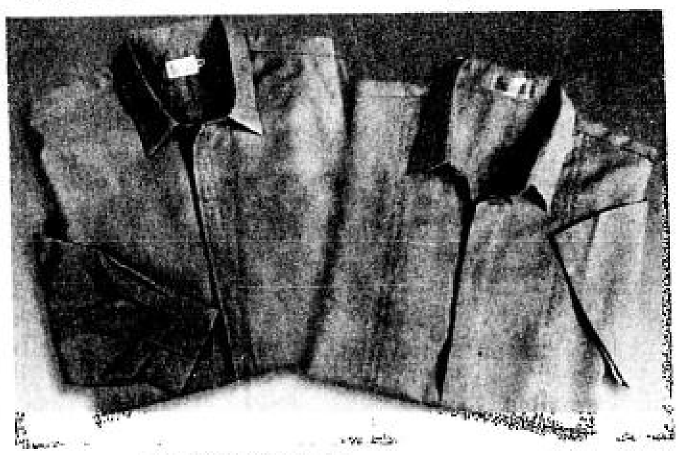

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